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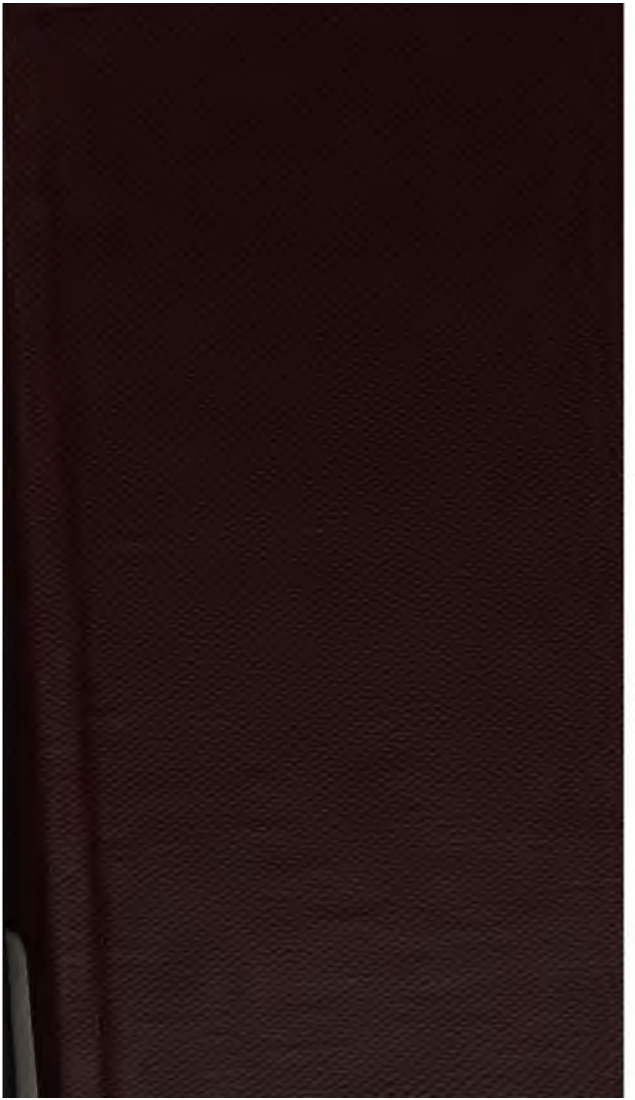

MEMORIAL OF SANFORD:

COMPRISING A

SELECTION FROM HIS SERMONS;

WITH A

MEMOIR.

BY M. OSCO BALLOU,

PASTOR OF THE UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY, BRIDGEPORT, CT.

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TO

HIS RELATIVES AND FRIENDS,

WHO HAVE DESIRED ITS PUBLICATION,

AND

FOR WHOSE ESPECIAL BENEFIT IT IS ISSUED,

THIS

"MEMORIAL OF SANFORD"

As Affectionately Inscribed.

M. B.

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MEMOIR.

INTRODUCTION.

If "history ought to be re-written," may it not be said, with equal truth, that biography has been highly defective, not in its style or manner of composition, but in its subjects? It has seized, for the most part, on the lives of the famous: the world's warriors and heroes, tyrants, and men of blood; not omitting its criminals, and those who have become notorious from selfishness, ambition, pride, and lust. True, it has embraced the noblest men of genius, in literature, science, and art; with many who have deserved its embalming power for their virtues, but how small a space has it allotted to unpretending worth; to moral and religious merit alone; to the self-sacrificing, philanthropic, and quiet laborers for God and humanity! How many of this class have sprung up to bless the walks of private life; exhaled the

sweetness of pious and benevolent souls, made their sacrifices, toiled their hours of duty, and passed away without memorial save in the hearts of those who knew and loved them, and leaving their names unrecorded except in "the Lamb's book of life!"

Pictures or sketches of such should be scattered throughout society. They would encourage goodness. They would strengthen virtue. They would silently admonish the selfish and vicious. They would assist in guiding the minds and blessing the hearts of our children. And that biography has so far overlooked them; that it has so often passed them by to seize upon examples of at least questionable influence, is doubtless chiefly owing to that false system of education which teaches us that goodness is no necessary element of true greatness; that a desirable eminence may be attained at even the sacrifice of virtue; and that we may win distinction and an enviable renown the more surely to kill with a Wellington than to heal with a Howard.

It is from considerations like these, principally, that the following memoir is given to the world; that an outline of Sanford's brief and unpretending history has been drawn from the archives of private friendship for the public eye; and that

while it shall serve as a memorial for those who knew him, and form, to some extent, a suitable example for the young, it may, at the same time, respectfully appeal to the common judgment and the common heart.

BIRTH AND EARLY HISTORY.

The border of Vermont, near its south-western extremity, is a wild and picturesque region. The Green Mountain range strides across it into the upper part of Massachusetts, with its eastern side broken and ragged, thrown up into huge masses of rock, crowned by noble old forest trees, or ploughed into deep ravines by the Deerfield River and its branches, leaving occasional summits, slopes, and intervals, to sustain a hardy and honest class of agriculturists. Its inhabitants, ever since its settlement, have retained many of the peculiar features of their Puritan ancestry. They are characterized by a somewhat strong sense of religious obligation, joined to a sturdy love of personal freedom; frank and simple in their habits; kind and hospitable in their feelings; laborious, tolerant, and possessing practical but vigorous native talent, rather than high culture, and plain but attractive home virtues rather than great social refinement. Indeed, their local position and mode of life have, to a great extent, hitherto shut them out from the more showy and

false world of fashion, and primitive habits preside still over their households, and primitive virtues gather around their hearth-stones.

Here, in the town of Readsboro', Merritt Sanford was born, on the 11th of October, 1812, and passed the first sixteen years of his life. He belonged to quite a numerous family, somewhat wealthy, and highly respectable, his father being one of the most prominent and trustworthy citizens of the town. In his early disposition and developments there was little to distinguish him from the better-disposed class of young men around him. He loved the sports incident to boyhood, and was not averse to sharing the toils of his father's farm. Still, there was very early manifested, and grew with his years, a disinclination to confine himself to the limited sphere of the mountain farmer, that was by no means prompted by pride, selfishness, or ambition. It sprang, rather, from a vague consciousness of powers that were capable of a somewhat wider and higher field of effort: the first expanding throe of faculties that required a different atmosphere for their development; and impulsive aspirations for a life less purely physical, and far more desirable.

His education during this period was such only as the place and time afforded. A summer school

of from three to four months, taught by some young lady of no very eminent attainments, and which few thought of attending over the age of ten years; with a winter term of about the same length under charge of a man of similar qualifications, for older pupils, where nothing was attempted beyond the simplest elementary studies, constituted the principal means of public instruction. He made the most, however, of these humble means, and was accounted among his comrades as a diligent student and an apt scholar. In the summer, his time was chiefly devoted to the labors of the farm, and he was often observed to take his book into the fields for study during the intervals of toil. In his sixteenth year he entered a store as clerk, and in a journal which he subsequently kept for a season, he alludes to it, remarking, that the business pleased him for a while, more from its novelty, however, than because he had a taste for it, and that in about three years he left it and returned again to his father's farm.

He was now approaching an important era in his history. The magical age of twenty-one was near. With the wide world before him, he must choose his path for life. He proposed to his own heart the solemn question: "What is to be—what ought to be the business of my life?"

It is worthy of remark, as showing his prevailing disposition at this early period, that the foregoing question, which I have copied from his own language, recognizes the claims of duty as paramount in selecting his occupation. The inquiry indicates a loyalty to moral considerations that formed the guiding star of his brief career.

A train of circumstances, together with the tendency of his own feelings, fixed a determination to adopt the Christian ministry as a profession.

There were many obstacles in the way, however, and many difficulties to be previously encountered and overcome. A brief view of the religious condition of society there at the time, will exhibit some of the more prominent of them.

He was educated in the views of the self-styled Orthodox. His parents were Methodists of a moderate kind, maintaining zealously the doctrine of endless retribution, and strenuously opposing the antagonistic sentiment of the final holiness and happiness of all men.

The latter doctrine, however, had many advocates through all that region. Toward half a century previous, Rev. David Ballou, an elder brother of the Rev. Hosea Ballou, of Boston, and the father of the writer, had settled in an adjoining

town (Monroe, Mass.), preaching as an itinerant, chiefly in the four contiguous counties, Berkshire and Franklin (Mass.), and Windham and Bennington (Vt.).

For some forty years or more was he a faithful herald of Universalism; and there was hardly a town through all that mountain region, stretching nearly from the Connecticut to the Hudson, that heard not his voice in its public proclamation, "without money and without price." At near the close of young Sanford's minority, therefore, the believers in Universalism in that section had become somewhat numerous. He had often attended the meetings of my father, as well as those of Rev. Hosea Ballou, who usually spent a Sabbath or two there on his annual visits to his relatives, and had frequently heard their views made the topic of private as well as public discussion. At about this time, also, the public mind there had become freshly excited with reference to these views, by several accessions to the Universalist ministry. Rev. H. F. Ballou, who has been for many years one of our most industrious and efficient preachers, had then but just entered upon his work in Monroe, Readsboro', Whitingham, and the adjoining towns; in which he was soon followed by Rev. Joseph

Barber, now of Paper Mill Village, N. H., a good scholar (having been bred a physician), and a logical and philosophical sermonizer.

The labors of these men gave a new impulse to the cause of truth. They served to call a more general attention to its claims, and, as may well be supposed, exerted no little influence in drawing to the ministry of reconciliation some four or five others, who soon after attempted it, including the subject of this Memoir, who, together with the writer, were finally all that adopted it as the great business of life.

There had been, too, quite a revival among the Methodists of Readsboro', and especially in the neighborhood of young Sanford's residence.

They had succeeded in getting up considerable religious excitement, and he began to think it full time to settle in his own mind the conflicting claims of these different prevailing views, and to take a decided stand either for the faith of his fathers, or what had already began to appear to him the more attractive and desirable doctrine of Universal salvation.

He began a careful and searching personal examination of the Holy Scriptures, reading also several important works on theology by able writers, among which he subsequently mentioned, with

much satisfaction, the admirable treatise of Dr. Southwood Smith, "On the Divine Government;" a work which, to the best class of minds, as a proof of Universalism, for its simple, clear, and conclusive reasoning, is hardly excelled by any merely human effort, except, perhaps, by Rev. Hosea Ballou's celebrated "Treatise on the Atonement."

As the result of this investigation, he says: "I came to the conclusion that Universalism is the doctrine of reason and revelation. I was filled with 'joy unspeakable,' and I resolved to preach it. Many obstacles were in the way. My parents remonstrated. I was poor, and my literary acquirements were quite limited; but, with the grace of God, I was determined to preach 'the unsearchable riches of Christ' to my fellow-men. Having this constantly in view, I continued with my parents, at least for the most of the time, working on the farm during the proper seasons for such labor, and teaching school in the winters; at the same time, devoting every hour at my command to studies which I thought would fit me for my intended work, until the 25th of January, 1835, when I began the work of an evangelist."

COMMENCES THE MINISTRY.

His first discourses indicated a good degree of talent, with a remarkable freedom in composition, for one who had hardly written anything more than a friendly epistle, and whose education in every respect was so very limited.

True, he was in his twenty-third year. The intervals of his summer toils and his winter teaching had been improved with a zeal and intensity of effort that are seldom found in connection with greater advantages; and hours that most young men would have given to amusement and recreation, he had dedicated chiefly to reading and thought. His earlier sermons plainly showed that this labor was not in vain. Those who had been familiar with his boyhood, and knew his humble means of improvement, were astonished to see him step forth so suddenly and so thoroughly qualified for his great work, with convincing thought and persuasive speech. And though a prophet is generally supposed to have little honor in his own country, he soon won an enviable reputation in his native town, and praise even from those who

could not agree with him in religious opinions. Methodists and Universalists alike attended his meetings. There was a fervor of zeal, a singleness of purpose, and a goodness of heart, joined with firmness, integrity, and a modest deportment, that won him a high position in their esteem and affections. He was immediately called on to preach in his own neighborhood and adjoining places, and continued his ministry in that region for about seventeen months.

In the spring of 1836, the Universalist Society in Bath, N. H., was destitute of a pastor, and, on hearing Mr. Sanford, he was invited to remove there and take charge of it; an invitation which he finally accepted.

MINISTRY IN BATH.

He removed to this place in the month of June. The society was a small one, but composed for the most part of very excellent individuals. They had erected a neat and attractive house of worship, and were able to support preaching for one half of the time, at a very respectable salary. The town was remarkably pleasant. Nestled in at the foot of the hills that prop the base of the far-famed White Mountains, and dotting the shores of the Ammonoosuc, near its junction with the Connecticut River, it formed a delightful place of residence. As a field of operations for a clergyman of rational and liberal views, it had its trials and difficulties.

These views had a few warm-hearted and devoted friends; but they encountered an opposition as bitter as it was blind, and as untiring as it was unchristian. But it formed a good battle-ground for one clothed in the true panoply of the Master. Here Mr. S. took up his residence, spending each alternate Sabbath with the friends in the adjoining towns. The people soon became

warmly attached to him. It was the beginning of a prosperous and happy ministry; and, for the few years that he remained, the cause of Divine truth moved steadily forward. The following autumn he was married to Miss Joanna E., youngest daughter of Henry Holbrook, Esq., of his native town. This union, though destined to be brief, was perhaps as perfect as any ever formed upon the earth.

I would represent neither party as faultless, except toward each other. In this respect, at least, they seemed to be so. Probably it falls to the lot of very few in that relation to maintain for any length of time the entire congeniality of taste and disposition, habit and feeling, that characterized their married life. Both were peculiarly fitted for it. He had strong social and domestic feelings. His love of home, kindred, and friends was more than ordinary, and formed a very distinguished trait in his character. He had great respect for females generally—too much, indeed, to allow him to address them with flattery, or treat them with the slightest insincerity. He always maintained that marriage should be based upon something higher than the realization of youthful passion, or the gratification of sensuous fancy. He believed that mankind were formed for it: that, by an in-

exorable law of their being, in culture, development, and the elements of a true life, they must be imperfect without it; that a single life for either sex was unnatural; and that their cordial union was demanded for the perfection of both.* With

* "When I consider the priceless worth of woman, the tenderness and strength of her attachments, the station allotted to her by the Creator, together with the influence which she is capable of exerting on the mental and moral culture of the human race, I tremble at the contemplation of the work before me, in addressing young ladies on their relations, their powers, and their duties. * * * * But, brief as my time has been on the stage of experience, I have lived long enough to know something of the dignity of woman's station, and the value of woman's worth.

"The mother who gave me birth, who watched over my infant years with untiring affection, whose lips gave me my first lessons in knowledge and religion, and whose heart was torn with anxiety as I left the paternal mansion to go forth into the world and act my part in the great drama of life—that mother was a *woman*. Those sisters, that were as olive plants in my father's house, whose hearts were knit together by ties as tender and strong as the sympathies of angels, whose feet were swift to render me aid and assistance, and whose souls were melted in pity and compassion at every tale of human woe,—those sisters were *women*. And more than all, that being who was the wife of my youth, who joined her fortunes, whether for weal or woe, unto mine for life; whose whole soul was instinct with love for my welfare, and who forgot even her own dangers and sufferings in tireless efforts to bless her infant charge; but who, alas! now sleeps in the grave, with that only child pillowed upon her arm,—yes, that wife was also a *woman*. I know, then, something of the being concerning whom I am to speak.

Miss Holbrook he had been acquainted from childhood.

Their parents had long been on terms of inti-

I have seen her in most of the varied duties of her station, and have been witness to both her weakness and her strength. * * * * Much has been said on the comparative merits of the sexes. Man has generally claimed the superiority, and in some respects truly. In physical strength and endurance; in animal courage and daring; and in intellectual vigor for abstruser studies; for efforts which call for great strength and comprehensiveness of thought—it will be acknowledged, doubtless, on all hands, that he is considerably her superior. But there are other elements, equally important in the sight of God—elements necessary to complete *human nature;* necessary for the comfort, instruction, and improvement of society, in which she most largely excels us. I refer to her social and moral feelings, and especially to her affections.

"Schiller, the German poet and philosopher, has well contrasted them in his poem on the worth of woman. Thus:—

"'Honored be woman! she beams on the sight
Graceful and fair as a being of light;
Scatters around her, wherever she strays,
The roses of bliss on our thorn-covered ways;
Roses of Paradise! sent from above,
To be gathered and twined in a garland of love.'

"'Man on passion's stormy ocean,
Tossed by surges mountain high,
Courts the hurricane commotion,
Spurns at reason's feeble cry.'

"'Woman invites him with bliss in her smile,
To cease from his toil and be happy awhile,
Whispering wooingly, come to my bower!
Go not in search of the phantom of power!

macy, and the children knew each other well. He believed that she combined the qualifications that were necessary to make him happy, and the at-

Honor and wealth are illusory—come!
Happiness dwells in the temple of Home.'

"'Man, with fury stern and savage,
Persecutes his brother man;
Reckless if he bless or ravage;
Action—action—still his plan.
Now creating, now destroying,
Ceaseless wishes tear his breast;
Ever wishing, ne'er enjoying,—
Still to be, but never blest.'

"'Woman, contented in silent repose,
Enjoys in its beauty life's flower as it blows,
And waters and tends it with innocent heart,
Far richer than man with his treasures of art;
And wiser by far in her circle confined,
Than he with his science and flights of the mind.'

* * * * * *

"'In the realm of man's dominion,
Terror is the ruling word,
And the standard of opinion
Is the temper of the sword;
Strife exults, and pity, blushing,
From the scene despairing flies,
Where to battle madly rushing,
Brother upon brother dies.'

"'Woman commands with a milder control,
She rules by enchantment the realm of the soul;
As she glances around in the light of her smile,
The war of the passions is hushed for awhile,
And discord, content from his fury to cease,
Reposes entranced on the pillow of peace.'"

Extracts from a Lecture to Young Women.

tachment that finally ripened into marriage had early sprang up between them. She was exceedingly modest and retiring in her manners, simple in her tastes and habits, amiable in her disposition, and most fondly attached to him. O, with what bright hopes and joyous hearts did they greet that November sun which dawned on the day of their union! Happy was it for them that

"Heaven from all creatures hides the book of Fate!"

The few years that followed, previous to his wife's death, were probably the happiest of his life. His subsequent allusions to them were frequent, and in terms which showed that they were never to be forgotten. In the days of sorrow and loveliness which succeeded, he terms them a Paradise, and throws back upon them such lingering looks as primitive man might have cast toward his lost Eden. At the close of his third year in Bath, he received an invitation to take charge of the Universalist Society in Hartland, Vt. Many considerations urged it upon his acceptance. The Society in Hartland was an old and tried one. It was sufficiently large to employ his whole time, would increase his income, which was needed for his growing family, and relieve him from the necessity of traveling, especially in the winter sea-

son, to supply appointments at a distance, as he was obliged to do while remaining at Bath. Much, therefore, as he was attached to his friends in the latter place, and strong as were their regards for him and his wife, he decided to leave, and took up his residence in Hartland, in July, 1839.

A WIDER, and, in some respects, a different field of labor opened before him here. The doctrine of Universalism had been preached for a much greater length of time. His congregation was large, and tolerably well instructed in its peculiar principles. The wants of the people were, therefore, somewhat different. His attention was called more directly to investigations that he had never pursued before. And although his preaching was still strongly of a doctrinal character, it became gradually less highly controversial: perhaps it may be termed more truly philosophical. He had studied the works of the eminent Dr. Spurzheim, and was charmed with them. Mental and moral science was revealed in a new light. His previous views upon these subjects had been somewhat vague and unformed. They now began to take shape and distinctness. And from some traits of his sermons, written along at this period, as well as from my private recollections of his correspondence and conversation, there was too much, perhaps, of a tendency to make religion the mere

thing of the intellect. It was a set of propositions addressed to the reason. Its entire rationalé must be mastered. Every particular must have its demonstration. Too little space was given to faith; too little scope was given to the affections. The whole sphere of the Divine operations, so varied, diversified, and often so mysterious; its complicated processes stretching off into infinity, and all its wonderful phenomena flashing their light across the depths of being, as comets across the sky, must be reduced to a system, and take a form that would bring them within the grasp of the human mind. The spiritual no less than the material world put on a stiff and mechanical aspect. The magical pencil that had mapped off the human skull; that had given "a local habitation and a name" to all the powers and faculties of the mind, had pushed its seemingly arbitrary regulations into the realms of spirit; had seized upon the most subtle of mental and moral operations, and reduced them to a mere clock-work. The Universe became a great time-piece, the mainspring of which was God. Perhaps the tendency of Sanford's mind throughout, though long struggled against, and finally very much modified, was to reasonings *à priori*. Taking the great fact of the Divine Sovereignty as a stand-point, and re-

garding the Divine attributes as primal forces, by the action of which all things moved, there resulted a kind of pantheism, in the abysses of which all subordinate agencies become swallowed up and lost. Moral existence,—could there be any such thing? Were not all moral actions, so termed, mere phenomena evolved from the apparent conflict of forces as necessarily operative and as purely mechanical as those that impel an engine or turn a mill? Still, he never lost sight of the fact, that there was such a thing as duty; that accountability was a reality; that somehow we were, after all, moral agents, with a work to perform, and a high destiny to realize. But we shall have occasion to notice more of these speculations before we close. Some incidents in his personal history now awaited him, of a highly important character; the most so, perhaps, of any which he ever encountered in life. Four years had rolled away since his marriage; years of almost uninterrupted happiness: a new source of pleasure had been opened to him and his amiable wife in the birth of a son. The cup of domestic bliss seemed now filled to the brim.

The winter of 1840–41 passed pleasantly away, divided between parochial duties, favorite studies, and the delights of his little household. His

brief journal, which was commenced the succeeding summer, alludes to this period of sunshine, and describes the emotions which its retrospect never failed to awaken.

"As the little boy increased in stature, and the germs of mind put forth their promising manifestations," he remarks, "I looked forward to the full enjoyment of a Paradise in my little family. But alas! an evil day came upon me. On the 3d of June, 1840, both my beautiful son and my devoted wife were taken from me by the mysterious operations of Divine Providence. For awhile, notwithstanding I had faith in the goodness of God and in immortality, I thought my affliction was too great to bear, and when I looked upon my lonely condition, and upon the cold, unfeeling world around me, I had a desire to depart and follow those pure and loving ones who had gone before me. But time and faith have been doing their work, and, by their silent influence, bringing me into a more calm and reconciled condition. And though I believe I have not called in question the justice and goodness of God in this measure of his providence, yet I have shed more tears over my own desolate state than over the destiny of the departed. 'And so 'I continue unto this day,' thanking God for existence, and the many bless-

ings he has given me, and trusting that 'the ills that flesh is heir to' will finally be overruled for good by his infinite wisdom, when 'this mortal shall put on immortality.' "

From the effects of this severe visitation he never fully recovered. They gave a tinge of melancholy to his sober hours, and threw a chastening influence over his lighter ones. They pressed a restraint upon the activity of his social feelings, checked his joyous impulses, rendered the current of his thoughts introversive, and gave a sombre tone to a character naturally of great cheerfulness. And, although he subsequently entered into the marriage relation again, with a very interesting and amiable lady, forming a union as fortunate and happy doubtless as could exist under the circumstances; and though he became popular and highly successful as a preacher and writer, holding an enviable position in the ministry of reconciliation, with a wide circle of very devoted friends, still it could not be concealed from those who had known him intimately from childhood, that the first freshness of the heart was gone, that much of the elasticity of his spirits had departed, and that the brightest portion, as it were, of his very being had been buried in the grave with his wife and child.

The following extracts are from his journal:—

"Oct. 11th, 1840.—To-day I can say that I have lived twenty-eight years. Twenty-eight years! This period looks short to me as I cast my thoughts on the past; but it has been long enough to bring about changes in science, politics, and religion, which have altered materially the complexion of the world. And what shall be twenty-eight years to come? O Lord! Thou knowest, and with Thee I leave the result. If Thou dost preserve me to see twenty-eight years more, O preserve me in the ways of truth and virtue, and grant that my labors may be of some benefit to my fellow-men. But, if Thou dost see fit to call me from this tabernacle of the flesh before my present days are doubled, enable me to be prepared for the summons."

"Nov. 20th.—This day brings to my mind most touchingly many once delightful but now sorrowful subjects of thought. It is a year to-day since my little son was introduced to the world. * * * For awhile 'the little angel,' as he was affectionately termed by his mother, grew in stature, and put forth tokens of intellect and affection, and then closed his heaven-lit eyes on this world of disappointment, and expired. O, what a bitter hour was that! But the next one was more bitter still; for in that his devoted, self-sacrificing mother, the

loving companion of my youth, shared the same fate, as though the happiness of Heaven could not be complete if one was taken and the other left, such was their loveliness, their sympathy with each other, and with the spirits of 'the just made perfect.' Since then my home has been dreary and desolate, and my condition like that of Adam mourning the loss of Eden.

"But I will not repine. These, I trust, are not the only fruits of time. The period is fast coming when all her children shall be born from above, and clothed in the garments of eternity. 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestations of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope: because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit; even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit: the redemption of our body.'

Bless the Lord, O my soul, for the light and comfort of Christian hope!"

The winter was now approaching. Coldly and sadly was it settling over that mountain region, robbing outward nature of even the few beauties it possessed for the eye dimmed with tears.

It seemed to increase his depression of spirits, and deepen the shadows upon his heart. His wife and child had been buried in Hartland, and it was determined to remove their remains to his native town, that their final rest might be among the ashes of their kindred. He found a change of scenes, for himself, and a partial relaxation of his duties, extremely desirable. He decided, therefore, on dissolving his connection with his society. It was no hasty step. He pondered it long and prayerfully. He had many warm friends there; and from the best inhabitants of the place, some who were most ardently attached to him. They mourned bitterly on learning his intention to leave. They used great exertions to induce him to remain. But he could not bring his feelings to consent to it. It had been the scene in part of the brightest and happiest moments of his existence, and the contrast was too severe. The following extract from the letter asking for a dismission will show us the leading considerations that urged his removal.

"The cause of my taking this step, may be found not in any very recent event, nor in any disaffection on my part toward the Society, but in the affliction with which it has pleased God to visit me. When I came among you, I flattered myself with the expectation that I might dwell with you, usefully and happily, for several years; but in an unlooked-for hour my family was taken from me by death, and my Eden of domestic and social bliss destroyed. From that hour I have thought that my stay with you would be short; and having concluded to remove the mortal remains of my wife and child, where they can rest with the dust of their kindred, I have purposed in myself to take my leave of you when this is done, which I expect will be early in the coming month of January. To leave you and my friends here—for I know that I have friends here—will be a trial to my feelings, but it is my conviction that it would be a harder one to come back here to live in comparative loneliness, amidst scenes which were once so rife with joy, but which are now shrouded in almost sepulchral gloom.

"It is my design to spend the winter with my relatives in the south part of the state, and then, if my life is spared, and the great Master of the moral vineyard has anything for me to do, I hope to

resume the pleasing duty of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The earnest solicitations he received to remain had almost shaken his resolution to leave, still he felt impelled to go. He wanted rest. He could hardly summon resolution for the mental efforts which his duties demanded.

"Dec. 3.—Thanksgiving day in this State. Had no meeting, partly because it was so thinly attended last year, and partly because I have not entered so deeply into the spirit of thanksgiving as I did last year. Then all was prosperity and hope with me; now nearly all is adversity and discouragement. This very day numbers just six months since my little family—my earthly heaven—was taken from me. 'Time flies swiftly,' it is true, but this period has seemed comparatively long, so lonely has been my condition, so bereaved my heart. But I have good health, and many kind and faithful friends. For these, and all other sources of comfort and happiness, may I offer unto the Lord continual thanksgiving."

"Jan. 1, 1841.—'Happy New-Year' greets me again, but it falls upon the ear with a more melancholy tone than in former years; not that it comes from less cheerful and benevolent friends, but that my mind cannot give it the same hearty

response. The past year has taught me a desponding lesson, and I look upon the future as more dark and turbulent than I have done in younger and brighter periods of my life, or than I did at the dawn of the year which has just now closed. I begin to think that the longer we live, the darker the future appears to us; and if this is the case, why should we count it a calamity to die in the bright morning of life, before the roses of hope have lost their freshness and beauty?

"But I will not look on the future with despair. My reason, philosophy, and religion, bid me view life as *a school*, whose elements of discipline, though severe, are necessary for the correction, development, and improvement of mankind. *The giant oak has been made by winds and storms no less than by serenity and sunshine.*"

On the third of January he took leave of his congregation in an address, which was published soon after in the "Universalist Watchman," at Montpelier, Vt. The following is from his Journal of that date:—"Preached my farewell discourse to the Society in Hartland. The congregation was very large, and many tears were shed. Oh! it was hard to tell them that I must go away when I could see regret manifested in the moistened eye, and hear its language in sobs and sighs!

It may be that I have erred in thinking it best to leave this good people at this time; but if I have, I shall find a ready excuse in the sentiment of a world's experience, that 'to err is human.'"

On the following Tuesday, in company with several friends who had joined him for that purpose, he started for Readsboro' with the remains of his wife and child. An excellent and appropriate funeral discourse was delivered by Rev. H. F. Ballou, from the text, "Be ye reconciled to God:" in which he urged that the only ground of reconciliation for the afflicted is the deep-wrought conviction that all things are under the control of a supreme and all-perfect Ruler, who will surely work out, by their instrumentality, the highest possible good for all his creatures. Even in those cases, therefore, where no reasons for suffering are visible, there should be the most entire confidence and trust, that it is demanded by a wisdom that cannot err, and a goodness that cannot be unkind.

The following picture from Sanford's Journal closes this sad scene:—

"Before the remains of my dear wife and child were deposited in their final resting-place, I thought that I must see them, that I might know the condition in which time and the journey had

left them. O, saddest picture in the book of memory! I had previously fortified my mind with the unavoidable conviction that corruption must have made sad havoc with those once beautiful objects; and I had instructed my moral feelings in the sublime and cheering truth, that these forms were but the *caskets*, which must turn to dust, while the *jewels* which once dwelt in them, and offered me so many attractions, and gave me so much joy, are garnered up in Heaven, where I shall eternally enjoy them, after I have put off this tabernacle of the flesh; and had I not, my feelings could never have endured the sight. The form of the upper part of their faces was left, so as to be quite easily detected, but that was nearly all. 'Alas!' said I to myself, 'I have seen an end of all perfection! I have beheld these decaying relics when clothed in beauty and radiant with the smiles of love. I have seen them move in the gayest scenes, and witnessed the gladness with which they enjoyed the beauties of nature, or mingled with the society of their kindred. But I see now their end. I see now that corruption is their father, and the worm their sister and their brother. And this is the doom of all. None wearing the human form, however beautiful, rich, or great, can escape. All that now live, and all

that come after us in the long march of time, must submit to a like destiny. I have therefore seen an end of all perfection.'

"But, blessed be God! light breaks in upon even this scene. This is not the final denouement in the drama of being. True, it is *an* end, but *the* end is not yet. 'THIS MORTAL MUST PUT ON IMMORTALITY'! Thanks be to God who giveth me the victory!"

On the banks of one of the pleasant little streams that weave their silver threads through the southern borders of Readsboro', in a quiet and secluded spot, interspersed with forest trees, was planted a modest marble slab, bearing the following inscription:—

JOANNA E.,

WIFE OF

REV. MERRITT SANFORD,

AGED 23 YEARS,

WITH M. SPURZHEIM, THEIR ONLY CHILD,

AGED 6 MONTHS AND 14 DAYS.

Both died in Hartland, Vt., June 3d, 1840.

Interred here Jan. 7th, 1841.

The remainder of the winter was passed, as he proposed, among his relatives in his native and the

adjoining towns. Much of his time was spent in reading and study, and for most of the Sabbaths he preached in the region round about. One was passed at home, to which I find the following allusion:—

"Sunday.—This is the first Sabbath which I have spent without either preaching or going to meeting for several years, and I wish it might be the last for several years to come. I love the sanctuary. I there hear truths of God, Jesus Christ, duty, and immortality; and these, I verily believe, when heard in the tones of the Divine oracles, are the great levers by which the moral world will be raised from corruption and degradation to virtue, holiness, and Heaven."

Very little of his reading was given to the lighter works in literature. Indeed, I never knew one of his intellect and taste who cared less for them. The better class of Reviews, Quarterlies, &c., with the works of standard authors on religion, science, and philosophy, were the most eagerly devoured of any; especially such as had any direct bearing on intellectual or moral improvement. He received several invitations to settle with societies in different places; from Brattleboro' and Springfield, Vt., and from Hinsdale, Winchester, and Manchester, N. H. The call from the society in the

latter place was peculiarly flattering, and would doubtless have been accepted, had he not just previously preached as a candidate in Middletown, Ct., and given some encouragement to the friends there that he might accept an invitation from them. Their official call was received by him in April, and his labors there as pastor commenced early in May.

MINISTRY IN MIDDLETOWN.

He entered upon his labors in this new field with considerable diffidence. He questioned seriously his adaptation to the place, and his qualifications to meet the peculiar wants of the society and the cause in this region. A few remarks in his Journal, while on a previous visit as a candidate for settlement, contain allusions to this fact.

"March 28th, 1841.—Preached again in Middletown. Suited my mind better than I did before, though the delicacy of feeling arising from the idea that I am on *trial*, cramps me, and prevents the free play of my powers. I know that it is foolish to feel so, but I also know several other things which I cannot prevent! I think it doubtful whether I shall have an invitation to settle here. And if I do, I doubt whether I shall accept it. It seems to me that my manner of preaching is not so well adapted to this region as it is to Vermont or Massachusetts. The cause has not progressed so far. There is need of more combativeness and destructiveness: and although I can

meet opposition when necessity requires,* yet I prefer to dwell amidst more peaceful and heavenly elements, especially in my present state of mind. And I really question within myself whether I ought to settle anywhere at present."

* An incident illustrative of this, had occurred at about the same time. In the interval between the two Sabbaths which he spent in Middletown, he visited New Haven, and one evening listened to the tirade of the celebrated Elder Knapp, against Universalism. "Never before," says he, "did I hear such misrepresentation, falsehood, and abuse, from the pulpit, and I hope I never may again. Universalist preachers were called, repeatedly, 'imps of hell,' 'fools,' 'ignoramuses,' and 'servants of the Devil:' besides, his perversions of their faith, and his stories about their conduct, were too bad to be endured. My spirit was so stirred within me, that I called him to account, and demanded *facts* to sustain some of his statements. But he would not obey this demand of duty. He knew, without doubt, that he had taken false ground; and it was a matter of no wonder that I was not to be heard." The following day, some of our friends, pleased with the position taken by Brother S., got out handbills and circulated the notice through the city, that he would preach in one of the Halls that evening. Though many of the bills posted up were torn down, yet the excitement was so great that the hall was crowded at an early hour. He spoke upward of an hour and a half, with great freedom and power: 1. Showing that the great leading principles of Christianity are as held by Universalists. 2. Contrasting these, with the statements made by Elder K., correcting his misrepresentations; and 3. Examining some of his silly and wicked stories, proving them false from the foundation. It was a masterly effort, and helped our cause much in New Haven.

The severe visitation of Providence which he had experienced, still weighed heavily upon his spirits. It haunted his waking hours with oppressive thoughts, and his sleep with visions of departed joy.

I cannot withhold the following allusion to it in his Journal:—

"May 12th.—For three nights past I have had vivid dreams of seeing my wife and child. This has afforded me a kind of melancholy pleasure—the more melancholy on account of their appearing to me as in sickness and suffering. O, ye images of purity and loveliness! I welcome your visitations to the veiled sanctuary of my heart: but I would that ye could come in the cheerfulness of eternal health and happiness! But even in your sufferings, ye appear pleasant and lovely as angels; for I see you in imagination, as I have seen you in reality, serene and placid amidst the most violent ragings of disease, and exhibiting such patience and fortitude as seemed to indicate that your minds were cast in a heavenly mould! May a remembrance of your charms go with me forever! Ye are the purest lights that have hitherto shone in my pathway, and without you the future still looks too dark for my endurance!"

I well remember, at about this time, we spent a very pleasant day together at the hospitable and friendly home of Rev. John Moore, then pastor of the church in Hartford. Sanford had just listened to a couple of Lectures from the famous O. A. Brownson, with whom we had a brief interview. Brownson's philosophy at that time had just passed into the phase of a violent eclecticism. He maintained, in his usually dogmatic and arrogant manner, that there were vital elements of truth at the basis of all generally-received opinions, however discordant or contradictory, and consequently, that no dogma of a sect or party could be entirely false. His lectures, however, just referred to, were on other topics. 1. "The Democracy of Christianity." 2. "The Reform Spirit of the Age —its good and its bad." Of the first of these, Sanford spoke very highly. He thought that the lecturer succeeded admirably in answering— 1. "Those who objected to Democracy because they thought it anti-Christian;" and 2. "Those who objected to Christianity because they thought it anti-democratic;" by showing that pure Christianity was purely democratic, using the term only in its philosophical signification.

The second lecture he was not pleased with. "My principal objection to it," he remarked, "is,

that he spoke disparagingly of the benefits of education; and after demolishing the systems which other men had proposed for the amelioration of the world, he left his hearers without a proper substitute." Sanford was an ardent, though a very candid and prudent reformer. He had some enthusiasm, though he could bear neither fanaticism, nor the cold, skeptical rationality of Brownson.* In the Temperance and Anti-Slavery movements, he was especially interested; and in his earnest,

* At a subsequent period, his Journal contains the following: "Finished reading 'Charles Elwood, or the Infidel Converted.' By O. A. Brownson. Brownson has formerly been an infidel, but now professes to be a Christian. This book was written to detail his own experience, and let the world know his present views of Christianity. The work is written in a bold, simple, and eloquent style, and there are many things in it which I highly admire. But the general train of thought running through it, or the author's theory of philosophy, I cannot approve. It is too speculative and mystical to suit me. If I understand it, it is a kind of German philosophy, which would convert Christianity into an undesigned, though fortunate production of nature, and immortality into an inheritance of posthumous fame. In a word, the professed and boasted Christianity of Brownson appears to me to be nothing better than a *Christianized Pantheism*, virtually denying the identity of God, and of Christ; and resolving God, Christ, Man, and Nature, into one mass of 'confusion worse confounded.' I shall be glad to be disappointed; but I fear that it is so, and that Christianity will suffer from it in this country, as it has in Germany."

but catholic spirit, labored for both. Of the latter, he said but very little in public, though I find his name among the officers of an Anti-Slavery organization in Hartland, Vt., and it is well known among those familiar with him, that he was a zealous and able public advocate of the former.

Having become fairly settled in Middletown, he was invited to take a share in the editorship of the "Universalist," a paper published in that city, by Mr. Conklin, and devoted to the exposition and defence of Universalism. He wrote much for it, and many of his contributions were among the most valuable it contained. But he was too labored a writer for popular reading. He could not dash off a racy article or a piquant paragraph easily, and was not, therefore, the best fitted to the work of an editor of a popular weekly journal. He was much better as an essayist.

As a sermonizer, there was still a very evident improvement going on, and a far greater number of his discourses were practical, and devoted to moral and spiritual topics: perhaps too much so for the peculiar wants of that society at that time. It had but recently commenced its existence. Many of the congregation were not fully instructed in the doctrine of the Gospel, or its evidences. And, as he suggested, I think that the prevailing

tone of his sermonizing would have been better adapted to a region in which the cause had been longer established. His services, however, were for the most part highly appreciated, and he won his warmest personal friends from among the most intelligent and excellent men of the city.

In many respects his circumstances at this period were highly favorable to his personal enjoyment. He had a young but growing society, embracing several families of high culture and refinement. The town was one of the most beautiful of all the charming ones that gem the valley of the Connecticut; and to one who enjoyed as deeply as he the serenity of calm natural scenery, associated with much architectural taste and beauty, it formed a delightful place of residence. His income, too, though not so much as he was offered by the society in Manchester, N. H., was still, for the first time in his ministry, enough for his comfortable subsistence, leaving means for quite an increase to his library. But, notwithstanding these outward sources of enjoyment, shadows still rested upon his spirit; sad memories came freshly to his thoughts, and a deep feeling of loneliness pervaded his heart. And yet that heart was veiled to most eyes. Not from the slightest insincerity, but rather from a sense of duty.

He would neither trouble others with his sorrows, nor court sympathy by their frequent exhibition. His appearance was for the most part quite cheerful, and often highly so, particularly in the social circle, and few among the many who enjoyed his conversation ever dreamed that he carried underneath that pleasant exterior a hidden sorrow that he must bear to his grave. Only to a few very intimate friends, or upon the pages of his Journal, that were closed to the public eye, did he give clear and frequent exposure to the fact; and then always in the spirit of Christian humility and trust. The following is another specimen:

"June 3.—To-day makes a year since death took from me all that I held most dear. I would not murmur at my fate; but this has seemed to be the longest and the least happy year that I have ever spent. It is true that I have been blessed with friends true and faithful, and I have not been without many sources of enjoyment, for all of which I wish to be grateful; but even amidst the brightest hours and the most pleasurable scenes, images of the pure and lovely creatures I have lost come crowding into my thoughts, and poison the purest and highest sources of earthly joy.

"What the year to come may bring forth is known only to Him who knoweth all things, but it ap-

pears to me that nothing worse can befall me, even though death should summon me away.

"'If that high world which lies beyond
Our own, surviving love endears;
If there the cherished heart be fond,
The eye the same except in tears—
How welcome those untrodden spheres!
How sweet this very hour to die!
To soar from earth and find all fears
Lost in thy light—Eternity.

"'It must be so: 'tis not for self
That we so tremble on the brink;
And striving to o'erleap the gulf,
Yet cling to Being's severing link.
Oh! in that future let us think
To hold each heart the heart that shares,
With them the immortal waters drink,
And soul in soul grow deathless theirs!'

"For some time I have been thinking that I would attempt to describe the character and amiable qualities of my departed wife, and record them in this Journal; but as yet I have not even dared to attempt the work. I could not express my convictions of the value of her social and moral character without creating the suspicion in all who might hereafter see it, that my estimate of her virtues was formed under the influence of a selfish and blind partiality; and I certainly could not speak of her except in terms of unmeasured commendation. Her name and her memory will ever

be associated in my mind with everything that is tender, meek, humble, affectionate, and Christian. For delicacy and quickness of feeling, and at the same time for equanimity of temper, I have never known her equal, and probably never shall. Though I was not permitted to live with her quite four years, I am indebted to her for the moral and religious influence which she breathed into my mind and feelings as I am indebted to none other except the Son of God. In all her domestic concerns she was cheerful and pleasant: in suffering, patient and uncomplaining; and in the prospect of death, peaceful and happy. Happily for her, she had been brought up in the nurture of a faith through which she viewed her Saviour as 'the Saviour of the world,' and I have often heard her say that she never knew what it was to fear death, or anything beyond it. And when the dark messenger came, she was as composed and tranquil as a child in the arms of its parent; and but a few moments before she breathed her last, pressing her palé, cold lips to my cheek, she said in the most tender and affectionate tone,—'*Merritt, do not weep, it will all be well.*'

"Yes,—I will hope that 'all will be well,' but I *must* weep. Yet will I weep *in hope*. Through my tears will I look forward to the time when I

shall meet thee and that cherub child in the bright and fadeless realms of immortality."

Little of interest occurred, that I have space to notice, during the remainder of this summer. At the session of the Connecticut State Convention, which was held at Middletown, in August, his installation took place; and he very soon after made a journey to Vermont, to visit his relatives and former parishioners, returning in season to attend the United States Convention, in New York, in September. At the meeting of the latter body he delivered an excellent sermon, which was subsequently published in a neat volume, embracing all the discourses preached on the occasion. These journeyings at a pleasant season of the year, and the interesting religious gatherings connected with them, served to restore in some good degree his former cheerfulness of mind and elasticity of spirits, and his pastoral labors and duties were entered into with a greater readiness and zeal.

"Oct. 11.—My birth-day. Twenty-nine years! So long have I been a breathing creature, to say the least, if there has been no mistake in dates. How much of that time I have *thought*, would be a hard question to answer; and how much of that time I have thought *right*, and *done right*, might be a still harder one. Oh! when one thinks of himself,

how little cause has he for pride! When I look back upon what I have been, I see that my being commenced in littleness, as it were in nothing, and that I have held it by a precarious tenure—resting seemingly upon a thread almost as feeble as a spider's web; and what is still more humiliating to me, especially while in a moral mood—and I would be so continually—I see that the greater part of my life has been little more than an *animal* life, devoted to eating, drinking, and sleeping, if not to folly, instead of being a highly intellectual and *moral* existence. And then, too, my life has not been all sunshine and flowers: it has been a series of difficulties and trials; though I would not complain of a hard fate, nor murmur against Providence. The past is filled with lessons to make me humble; and if I venture an eye toward the future, what can I see? Ah, nothing! I cannot penetrate the veil that shrouds the future. I 'walk by faith;' and this is, after all, probably the safest way for me to walk. * * * * And does not faith tell me that all those things at which I sometimes complain will yet turn out to my advantage? Does it not assure me that I am a being of *progress*, and that the mixed vicissitudes of life are ordained as the elements of my *discipline* to raise me up from littleness to greatness;

from an infant to a man; from a man to an angel? So I read in Revelation and in nature. O, blessed faith! May I live in its spirit; in resignation to the seeming evils of my lot, and act in agreement with its purpose, in performing the duties which it imposes. Then shall I live and act worthy of myself and of the place assigned me in creation. The Lord grant me light and strength to do so in future, more fully than I have in the past!"

"Oct. 27.—Had some conversation with H— S—, on religion. He would not admit that there was any religion different or distinct from morality; and with still greater regret, I found him to be a Pantheist, confounding God with the universe; and still worse, he assured me that some of my brethren in the ministry confessed, though in confidence, that they agreed with him in his views of God!* * * * These things give me a pain which I cannot express. If these views are true,

* I can hardly credit this statement of Mr. H— S—. Our ministry is too poor to pay the price asked by hypocrisy. An infidel, or Pantheistic clergyman, would be most likely to seek the more popular and wealthy sects. There was *one*, however, in our ministry at that time, in this State, who, I am prepared to believe from his subsequent history, *might* have made such an admission. I doubt there having been any other.

I must throw away my Bible, my highest incentives to virtue, and my hope of immortality. I cannot do it. My head and my heart rise up against it."

It was about this period that he commenced the study of authors on Geology, a science to the investigation of which he finally devoted much time with absorbing interest and attachment. Having incidentally fallen into the company of Professor Silliman, he was attracted to a perusal of his "Appendix to Bakewell's Geology;" and with that part of it which discusses the connection between the science and revealed religion, he was particularly pleased. It excited him to pursue the subject with the impression that its facts would be found to correspond to, and confirm the sacred history. He also read an article of Prof. Hitchcock's, on "The Connection between Geology and Natural Religion;" and "though I am not acquainted," says he, "with the details of this interesting science, (which I very much regret), I think that the article is very able. He contends, and it appears to me *proves*, that Geology adds new light to natural religion. 1. By furnishing evidence of direct and repeated acts of creative power. 2. By furnishing proofs both of a general and special Providence. 3. By furnishing numer-

ous illustrations of the Divine Benevolence; and 4. By enlarging our conceptions of the plans of the Deity."

To these he added immediately another admirable article from Prof. H. on "Geology and Revelation," published in the 5th vol. of the "American Biblical Repository," in which he maintains that they agree: "1. In teaching that the material universe had a beginning. 2. In regard to the agents which have been employed in effecting the changes that have taken place in the matter of the globe since its creation—viz.: water and fire. 3. They both represent the earth as having once been submerged beneath the ocean. 4. In teaching that the work of creation was progressive, after the creation of matter. 5. In the fact that man was the last of the animals created. 6. In the fact that it is but comparatively a recent period since man was placed upon the earth. 7. In representing the surface of the globe to have been swept by a general deluge, at a period not very remote. And, 8. He imagines that there may be an agreement in regard to the final dissolution or destruction of the earth. Still, he admits that there is a *seeming* discrepancy between Geology and Revelation, though chiefly in regard to chronology; a topic which he has discussed in

the 6th vol. of the Rep., but which I have not read."

"Nov. 5.—On looking over dates, I find that I have been in this place six months; or rather, that I have preached here twenty-six Sabbaths. What can I now say of my location? Not what I wish I could. Considering its age, I think the society quite a good one, but have not found so much Universalism here as I expected. And besides, the doctrine being but little known, the taste for preaching is, I think, for the combative style, and it has seemed to me that some of my best, most evangelical sermons, have not been realized. Perhaps the fault is in me; I can only give my impressions. Much of the time I have been here I have been lonely and low-spirited, except when absorbed in study, * * * and I have no one to whom I can unbosom myself, and with whom to sympathize."

A few days after, an incident occurred concerning which I ought to speak cautiously, and yet which I cannot well overlook, as it had in the end not only a powerful influence on his feelings, but entered largely into the causes that finally induced his permanent separation from the society.

Attempts were making for a united Temperance movement among the various churches in the city.

It was proposed to have a series of lectures on the subject, one from each of the clergymen; and two of the deacons of different Orthodox churches called on him to solicit his co-operation. He assured them that he had for years been deeply interested in the proposed reform, and that he had no objection to complying with their invitation. Consequently, at the close of the service on the following Sunday, he invited the members of his society to tarry for a moment; laid the facts before them, and submitted the question, whether as a body they could participate in the movement, and open their house of worship to Temperance Lectures?

"Greatly to my regret," says he, "I found only a small minority in favor of it, the most of them pleading that the effort was a political and sectarian one, and that this step had been taken by our religious opposers to injure the society! I saw that the feeling was so strong that nothing could be done, and thought it best to submit with all the patience and resignation in my power."

On receiving a second call from the Temperance Committee, he concluded to give a lecture when his turn came, if a place could be found for it, and promised, at any personal sacrifice, to aid the cause what he could. He regarded it as pre-

eminently a good cause; and felt that if he had fallen into a place where he could not freely utter his thoughts upon such subjects without giving offence, his convictions of duty would require him to seek an atmosphere more congenial to his taste and feelings. His conclusion was: "I have said to myself that I will be a *man*, and, if possible, *a Christian*, leaving results to God!"

"Dec. 13.—Read Channing's two discourses on the Evidences of Christianity. I think them truly excellent. There is at once a candor and clearness; a willingness to hear objections, and a simplicity and force in answering them, and in the treatment of his whole great subject, which is rarely to be found in any writer; and his arguments appear so philosophical and conclusive, as seem sufficient to convince any candid and intelligent mind that Christianity *is* and *must* have been Divine in its origin.

"When I compare it with the systems which men have formed, and survey the age in which it commenced its benevolent mission, and see how free it was from selfishness, littleness, and crime, —how it rose above the whole world in its views of God, duty, and destiny—and how it has ever shone brighter from being examined, I have often said to myself, as Channing here says to the world,

'I cannot reconcile these facts with a human origin.'"

"Dec. 14.—Heard Rev. Leonard Bacon, of New Haven, give a good lecture on self-education. He defined it to be *the continued exercise and unfolding of the whole powers of the whole man.* He said that the greatest mark of distinction between the lower orders of creatures and man is, that he alone has the power of *self*-culture. * * * * He pointed out a course of study to be pursued by a man who would make the most of himself.

"1. He would have him learn to read, write, and cipher, *well.* These are the keys to universal knowledge.

"2. He should learn Geography and History. These he must study together, or he will learn neither to any great profit.

"3. He must acquaint himself with moral and political philosophy; not that he should devote himself to what are vulgarly called party politics, for this would be small business; but he should learn the principles of the government under which he lives, and of other states and countries; investigate their bearings on the people, and then inquire into the *right* and *wrong* of all great questions agitating his country.

"4. He should study the English language: *first,*

by its grammar; and *secondly*, by constantly using a good dictionary, (Webster's is the best, for it gives the *exact* meaning of words); and *thirdly*, by reading a few choice standard authors.

"5. He should make the physical sciences matters of study; not that he must be a complete master of them; but he *can* and *should* know what are their leading principles. Astronomy, Chemistry, Geology, and Physiology, were especially mentioned, and the advantages of knowing something of them briefly and eloquently described."

The subject of Temperance again came up. The community was much excited in regard to it. The time was approaching when the question of license was to be acted on at the ballot-box; and there was much division of opinion, and some warm feeling on both sides in regard to it. Many of the best men in the society, though friends of Temperance, feared that its public discussion by their pastor, under the circumstances, would create strong disaffection, and probably a division and separation of the Society; and though he would not relinquish the prospect of ultimately speaking upon the subject, yet he agreed to postpone his promised lecture for a time, and requested three of his principal friends to communicate the facts

to the Committee of the Temperance Society as his excuse.

"Dec. 31.—Here closes the year 1841. It has been to me a year of uncommon conflict, labor, and trial. It would be the grossest ingratitude in me not to confess that I have been blessed with much of prosperity, but several things have conspired to render the year that is now gone one of peculiar trial to me." Among these he mentions the sad memory of his one great loss: "over which his heart still continued to sigh;" and passes to speak of his sorrows and difficulties with his Society.

He alludes very feelingly to the hopes and expectations with which he settled there: pays very high compliments to many individuals and families in his parish, but expresses his disappointment that the society in general was not in some respects what he thought it should be—that it had too little warm love for religion; too much fondness for anti-Orthodox preaching; and too little for that which was designed only to build up truth and virtue—facts that rendered him but poorly reconciled to his situation. Doubtless his injured feelings at the time in regard to the Temperance cause, his somewhat melancholy mood of mind, and his extreme sensitiveness and loyalty to what

he considered *duty*, might have helped to give the facts a darker coloring to his thoughts than they deserved; and most certain I am that he left not one word on record that was designed to reflect unjustly on a single human being. He concludes his remarks thus:—"But notwithstanding all my disappointments and trials, I have hope in God, and the most unshaken confidence in virtue—in true Christianity. With this hope, and this reliance, I continue my efforts in faithfulness to my mission, under the conviction that 'in due season I shall reap, if I faint not.'"

"Jan. 1.—A New Year! 1842! * * * Well, so be it. Let time pass. The world was not made to stand still. Changes, decay, and Death, are all necessary. The fact that they make us think, and sigh, and weep, is not the least of the evidences which we have of their value and utility. Poor creatures should we be, doubtless, if we were governors of the world. We should command its sun to stand still; stop the progress of time, decay, ruin, and death; and with them we should stop ourselves! When shall we, poor mortals, learn to be wise? God governs *right*. So the Scriptures teach, and we should believe it, if we thought right and acted right. Time's changes, dark and fearful as they sometimes are, have a

Divine mission. They are the ordained elements of our discipline and improvement. Thanks to the Ruler—so I am learning. I say it not boastingly, but in humility, and with a thankfulness which my heart feels. I have drank deeply of affliction. For a time, I thought the draught too bitter to bear, but it has been gradually ministering to my spiritual health. It has served to wean me from the passing and perishing things of time; to chasten and elevate my moral feelings; to give a quicker and deeper sense of sorrow for the sufferings of my race; caused me to take more thought for 'the inner man of the heart,' and the true sources of happiness; and inspired me with a stronger relish for 'the bread of life which came down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.'

"The time has been, when I looked upon affliction with fear and trembling; but I believe that I can now say, that that time is passed. I have learned who it is that uses the rod, and what it is used for. It is in the hand of a *Father*, and he never employs it but for the correction and benefit of his children. My chief concern now is, that I bear its inflictions with patience, fortitude, and resignation; and that it realize in me its Divine purpose, in chastening and purifying my feelings; in

elevating my views and hopes of immortality, and thus prepare me for the fulfillment of the object of my being. But, that this may be accomplished, I have something to do. It will not be enough that I am passive. I must act. I must consider and second the means of Providence in this work, and make it my chief business to bring my whole nature into accordance with the laws, requirements, and will of my Maker.

"To this work, may I be more faithful during the New Year, than I have been during the old one. I will try to keep the words of the poet in mind:

> 'Count that day lost, whose low descending sun
> Views from thy hand, no worthy action done.'"

For the three months following he was, as usual, very diligently employed in the duties of his station: writing, as was his general custom, an average of almost two sermons per week, besides much for the paper; attending also with tolerable faithfulness to his pastoral duties,—though, like many other good men and hard students, he was never famous for making frequent calls on his parishioners —and still finding time for a considerable amount of reading. "Guizot's History of Civilization," "Channing's Works," The Works of Taylor— "Natural History of Society," *et cet.*, "Dewey's

Discourses," "Caldwell's Essays on Phrenology," and "Jouffroy's Introduction to Ethics," were embraced in it, besides "The American Eclectic," "Boston Quarterly," "Biblical Repository," and other lighter works;—preparing during this time, and delivering a lecture before the Franklin Institute, and a lecture on Temperance in Portland, in addition to preaching three times on each Sabbath for the most part, and attending to a Bible class on one evening in the week. Indeed, this was little more than an ordinary specimen of the labor he performed, and the greater part of it generally was well done.

I have suggested that in the earlier part of his ministry there was a tendency to regard religion as addressed chiefly to the intellect, and reasoning from those great fundamental principles which are first seized on by the theological student, it seemed the clearest result of logic that there was no such thing as *evil* in the sight of God; that all things, even the most minute, being in existence from his deliberate choice, must in the highest sense be perfectly *good*. This mode of argumentation was fallen into very easily from the frequency with which he had been called on to deduce the ultimate happiness of all from the supremacy and will of God. But a gradual change, not so

much in his opinions, as his course of study and habits of thought, now commenced, which kept on increasing until it had finally affected some of his views very materially.

His combative propensities were never very strong, and though possessing a somewhat logical mind, and a fondness for reasoning, he soon felt a growing distaste for a merely anti-Orthodox theology. His tastes became more spiritual, his studies turned to the moral bearings of Christianity, and his sermonizing became more generally addressed to the conscience and sense of duty. The reading of Jouffroy, and some other similar authors, at just this period, highly encouraged this tendency, and indeed compelled him at last to face that inexplicable problem, born of the reason and conscience, viz.: Divine Sovereignty and Human Accountability.

The facts of his moral nature, in the light of consciousness; his conscience, the crowning excellency of his soul, all assured him, as with a Divine overpowering voice, that he was a moral, accountable being; and reason answered, "God is sovereign, and there can be no will but his own!" This conflict between reason and the moral feelings, which goes on, doubtless, to some extent in the minds of most men, can hardly be said to have

terminated in his case during life, but it changed the relative position of his articles of faith. The grand idea of human destiny as held by Universalists, the great central truth of the Gospel, was still believed as firmly, and cherished as dearly by him as ever; perhaps more so, as affliction had taught him its value; but still it had brought up the important idea of duty into the foreground of the picture, had given it a prominence in his thoughts, and made it an object of effort, far more than it ever had been before. It became a favorite conviction with him that the purpose of human existence was purely moral, that life here was merely a discipline, a primal school in which to train us for immortality.*

In the month of April, he was again called to test the efficacy of his faith under bereavement, in the death of his oldest sister. It was another bitter trial to him, and called out some of the higher

* The following represents the tone of his sermonizing at this period. "So teach us to number our days," &c. "In making this prayer, it is not enough that we sincerely desire the good intimated, it is of importance that we have active faith in God as our Teacher, the conviction that he *will* so teach us if we will but become his scholars. And are we not already in his school? What is this life but a *school?* What is the world we inhabit but a Divine *seminary*, in which we are placed for instruction and discipline?"—(*Extract from a discourse on Ps.* xc., 12.)

traits of his character. He was exceedingly fond of her, and mourned much over her early departure, and the motherless little ones she had left, at the same time giving utterance to his deep feelings of confidence and trust in God. A sermon on "Human Destiny," called out by this event, is one of his most earnest declarations of faith and hope. Neither he nor his sister, in passing through the diseases incident to childhood, had encountered the one most malignant to persons of maturer years. Both had escaped the measles. He had always dreaded the disease, and now that she had died with it, his apprehensions were so increased that he seemed to have a kind of premonition that he should never survive its attack. Twice had he been exposed to it within a few years, and in both cases referred to it with anxiety: expressing in one instance his earnest wish that when it did come he might be in his father's house—where he could have a mother's care and sympathy. This was the disease of which he finally died!

Early in the spring of 1842, he began to feel the premonitory symptoms of a bronchial affection, to which, however, he paid little heed, until the first Sabbath in April; when he remarks, that "for several weeks I have had a difficulty in my throat—something, I fear, like the first stages of

bronchitis, which has troubled my speech; and I feel it to-day more sensibly than at any other time. I believe," he adds, "that I have spoken too much lately, especially as I have had something of a cold about my lungs and throat."

During the intervening year between this period and April, 1843, very little occurred in his history that I have space to notice. In September he became a co-partner with Rev. John Moore, of Hartford, in the purchase of the "Universalist," a paper of which they had been for some time the editors, and which they made a very interesting and useful Journal; though it is very doubtful whether it increased their wealth very much. At any rate, if it did not benefit them in any other way, I am very sure that it was an important aid to the cause of divine truth in this dark and bigoted State. The following scrap from his Journal must not be passed over, as it indicates, in common with the general tone of his writings at the time, a greater degree of cheerfulness than he had previously enjoyed for a long period.

"March 1.—Opened the County Court with a prayer. Suited my mind better than I did a year ago, but not as well as I could desire. I would not be afraid of *men*, but when I stand up in the presence of gray-haired judges, and hard-headed,

if not hard-hearted lawyers, I am almost disposed to tremble."

Truly has Channing said, "Formerly Felix trembled before Paul; now the successor of Paul trembles before Felix!" His throat had continued to trouble him very much for the whole year, and this spring seemed to be worse than ever. He finally made up his mind to leave Middletown.

The principal reasons he assigned were—1. The condition of his throat requiring rest. 2. His unwillingness to be fettered in regard to the subject of Temperance. 3. His conviction that he was unsuited to the wants of the people in this region, and unable to perform the labor that the interests of his Society demanded.

These I find in his Journal: though the letter he sent to his Society in June, asking a dismission, mentioned, as the chief cause, the condition of his throat. Dr. Woodard had just operated on it, cutting off the palate, hoping that might help him. He was taking medicine for it from various physicians, with but little advantage from any, except, perhaps, a temporary relief from the use of some botanic remedies.

He began to fear seriously that he should have to abandon the ministry, perhaps entirely, and the thought was very painful. He knew that his pro-

fession was a toilsome, and in many respects a thankless one, but still he loved it, ardently and devoutly. Life would have been worth little to him without opportunities for his favorite studies, and these he could hardly hope to pursue to any great extent if compelled to give up preaching. At any rate, he must suspend his labors for a time, and accordingly he tendered his resignation on the 21st of June.

But as a dark and portentous cloud seemed rising from this source to shadow if not ruin his professional prospects, a bright sun from a clear sky was at the same time dawning on his social being. Once more he began to look forward to all the domestic endearments and enjoyments of a *home*. He had been forming a very pleasant acquaintance with Miss Adeline Campbell, of Portland, a remarkably intelligent, accomplished, and amiable lady, and promises of marriage had already passed between them.

But as the legal sanction of their union was postponed to the early part of September, he still remained with his Society, preaching the greater share of the time until the close of August, when leave of absence for six months was granted him, and Rev. L. B. Mason employed to fill the desk for that length of time. He took leave of his

people in a very touching and appropriate address on the first Sunday in September, contributed $100* to the Society on settling with it—to be appropriated to repairs on their house of worship—paid $50 to have the "Universalist" taken off his hands—was married on the 13th, and immediately started with his lady on a journey, *via* Boston, where they passed a week or two, among the Green Mountains of Vermont, and his friends and relatives in that region. It was his design to pass a couple of months among them, and return to finish the winter in Portland with his wife's friends, and if possible renew his regular labors in the ministry in the spring. In Boston he obtained from a German physician some homœopathic medicines, that he thought gave his throat much relief. He also purchased the back volumes of the Christian Examiner, to the number of over thirty, which he regarded as a very valuable work.

The following extracts from his Journal will give some idea of his studies while on the mountains, aside from the time occupied in visits, recreations, &c. I may add, that during this time he preached occasionally.

"Oct. 8.—Concluded reading Neander's His-

* This, by a vote of the Society, was subsequently refunded.

tory of the Christian Religion and Church. I have been much edified in its perusal, though my anticipations have not been realized." In another place he speaks of the translation as very bad.

"Oct. 9.—Read several articles in the Christian Examiner. Am very much pleased with those on the Early Literary History of Christianity."

"Oct. 25.—Concluded D'Aubigné, (History of the Reformation). Think myself well paid for the perusal. He has truly given a vivid account of the times, events, and personages of the Reformation; and his history doubtless will continue a popular one for a long time. It is my opinion, however, that it will not rank with the highest class of Histories, as it appears to me that he betrays too great an interest to plead the cause of the Reformers, instead of making the facts of their lives plead it for them, and spends quite too many words in soliloquizing over the events of the narrative. As a record of names, dates, events, and facts, it is doubtless a masterly work, but as a philosophical exposition of the great principles which were contested at that remarkable era, and their influence on mankind, it cannot, it seems to me, have the highest praise."

"Nov. 3.—Read in Macaulay, (Miscellanies), his review of Lord Bacon. It is certainly a splen-

did production, but with some parts of it I am not exactly well pleased. It appears to do justice to Bacon's moral character, and indeed to his intellectual ability, but it does not appear to me that he is just to the ancient systems of philosophy. Though it is true that those systems were not *experimental*, they did not spurn—certainly not all of them—to be *useful*. Was it not the great study of Socrates to make all philosophy useful? to apply it to all the purposes and pursuits of human life?"

"Nov. 7.—Continued Macaulay—his review of 'Ranke's History of the Popes;' in which he discourses pretty freely on Romanism and Protestantism. It is written with great ability and eloquence, though I can hardly subscribe to his reason against the decline of the Romish power—viz.: that religion is not an *inductive* and *progressive* science, or subject of inquiry."

"Nov. 12.—Preached two discourses in Stamford. * * * Throat troubled me but little while speaking, but felt rather tender and sore afterward.

"13.—Throat appears the worse for speaking on yesterday. Have now preached seven sermons since coming on the mountain: too many, I fear, for my good. But it is hard for me to say *no*."

"Finished reading Macaulay. I think I have not read this man in vain. In some respects, I think him the best writer that I ever read, particularly in the field of general literature. I ought to *study* him thoroughly."

"Commenced reading 'Palfrey's Lectures on Jewish Scriptures and Antiquities.'"

In the latter part of the month he returned with his wife to her friends in Portland. Here he commenced "Stephen's Miscellanies," the work of an able English Essayist, little known in this country, but in some more recent productions, I am happy to say, an advocate of the doctrine of Universal Salvation. He also read Milman's History of Christianity, and wrote for the Trumpet and Universalist Magazine a brief biographical notice of Rev. David Ballou, who had died some years previous, in Monroe, and who was mentioned in the early part of this Memoir. It was to him, more than to any other individual, that Sanford felt indebted for the early tendency of his thoughts and affections to Universalism. "Mackintosh's History of England," "Hallam's Introduction to the Literature of Europe," parts of "Mosheim's Church History," "Cox's Life of Melancthon," &c., were also works which he studied during the month of December; with particular reference to

the light they shed on the era of the Great Reformation.

"Jan. 27.—Took up 'Gibbon's Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.' I have before read considerable in this sublime though infidel work, but have now taken hold of it to read in course. His description of the sudden changes of power in the hands of those who aspired to wear the imperial purple during the second and third centuries of the Christian era, is a luminous but mournful commentary on the delusive glories of this world." * * * "Tried to write a sermon, but the effort was next to fruitless. After turning from the pages of Gibbon, my poor faculties are so oppressed with a sense of their own littleness, and of the meanness of my efforts in comparison with the proofs of dazzling genius in his work, that I can hardly muster mental energy enough to fill my pen and approach my paper. This may be ridiculous, but I cannot help it."

"Feb. 5.—Finished reading Gibbon's Memoirs of Himself—a most interesting work. That he was a man of great genius and industry, must be acknowledged by every discerning mind which knows anything of him. Having read his history up to the celebrated 15th Chapter, in which I have marked the steps of a stately and dignified giant,

I have concluded to turn aside and read the account of his Life as given in Lord Sheffield's publication of his Miscellaneous Works, comprising his Autobiography, Correspondence, &c. It is astonishing and encouraging to think of the amount and intensity of his labors.

"He devoured and digested whole libraries; and when he took his pen to commence his great work, which he had projected, it seems that his patience was sorely tried before he could acquire a style which would answer at all to his ideal.

"'Three times,' says he, 'did I compose the first chapter, and twice the second and third, before I was tolerably satisfied with the effort. In the remainder of the way I advanced with a more equal and easy pace; but the 15th and 16th chapters have been reduced, by three successive revisals, from a large volume to their present size.' He was engaged just about twenty years on the 'Decline and Fall.' Considering the labor it cost him, and its value, it is a matter of no wonder that he felt the emotions, on finishing it, which he describes on p. 107 of the volume before me.

"Though his fortune was moderate, he bought books after books, till he had a library of between six and seven thousand volumes. It is plain that after the age of 22 or 23, religion was never a sub-

ject of deep interest with him; and it is probable that after he had made himself acquainted with the great Grecian and Roman writers on History and Philosophy, and especially after associating with Voltaire, Hume, and other learned infidels, he almost scorned to give it a respectable notice, or any, except as a baseless and useless superstition connected with the course of his History.

"I have not yet found the least hint of his having read the Bible at all, only while at school, and then merely a portion of the Gospels, as an exercise in the study of the Greek language. He seems to have had no faith in immortality; and he does not even speak of his having faith in the existence of a God. In alluding to his old age, and death, he merely says, 'I will not suppose any premature decay of the mind or body; but I must reluctantly observe that two causes, the abbreviation of time, and the failure of hope, will always tinge with a browner shade the evening of life.'"

"Feb. 15.—Concluded reading Gibbon's Miscellanies, though several of his articles I have passed over lightly, yet looking diligently for what he says on subjects pertaining to religion. His infidelity, in my opinion, is easily accounted for without any disparagement to Christianity. If I were to go into the matter, I should ascribe his infidel-

ity: 1. To his natural want of taste for religion, as evinced in his early years and education. 2. His conversion, first to Romanism, and secondly, to Calvinism. 3. His acquaintance and association with Voltaire, Boyle, Hume, and other learned infidels. And 4. His sympathy with the spirit of the Greek and Roman Historians and Philosophers. To these should doubtless be added the corrupt forms of received Christianity."

"28.—Read in Gibbon. Concluded his celebrated 15th and 16th chapters. They contain, in my opinion, about the strangest and most dextrous combination of facts and false coloring which was ever put together by mortal hand."

"March 16.—Read in Carlyle's Hero-Worship. In the afternoon went to Middletown. The trial of the three men, Roberts, Bell, and Hall, for the murder of Mrs. Bacon, last September, has terminated most unexpectedly. Yesterday, as the evidence stood, it all being *circumstantial*, there was more against the two former than against the latter; and the public expected to hear the sentence of death pronounced against the three today. But Hall made confession last night, that *he* was the guilty man, and that the *others had no part in it!* What an argument against the validity

of circumstantial evidence in a trial for capital offences!"

Some time previous to this, feeling that the opposition of a few individuals to the course he had pursued upon the subject of Temperance was impairing his influence and usefulness; and thinking, too, that his society generally was not disposed to aid him in taking a manly and independent stand upon the subject, he once more signified his wish to resign his connection with it. Much that was unpleasant, not to say wrong, followed in the way of discussion and action upon the subject, which perhaps it would do no good to repeat, until it was finally settled that his resignation should be accepted, and his final farewell was pronounced on the 28th of April, 1844.

He again took up his residence with his wife's parents in Portland, and in the bosom of that estimable family, released from the cares and responsibilities of his pastoral office, and with the pleasant consciousness that he had been faithful to his trust,—that during all the trials and difficulties which he had been called to encounter, he had at least striven with earnestness and prayer to do what was *right* in the sight of God,—he was contented and happy. His general health rapidly improved; his diseased throat from time to time

seemed to be better, and he resumed his studies with renewed zeal, to qualify himself for usefulness, when time and opportunity should open a new field of labor. I might add, that he occasionally supplied the desk in Middletown, chiefly through exchanges, until the settlement of the present excellent pastor of the Society, Rev. T. P. Abell. The following is from his Journal :—

"June 18.—In the afternoon went over to Middletown, and called to see Hall, the murderer, for the last time. He is to be executed on Thursday. He still seems callous to the *moral* character of the crime for which he is to suffer. Though he manifests *regret*, I can see no signs of genuine *penitence* in him. In regard to the moral nature, or conscience, he appears to me to be almost a perfect idiot. After talking and praying with him, I took him by the hand and said, that in taking my leave of him, I would use the last sentence of the judge, as expressive of the sincere desire of my heart, and that I used it with strong *faith*: 'May Almighty God have mercy on your soul!' He squeezed my hand, trembled, and wept.

"As I left his cell, I observed that his eye followed me—his countenance speaking the most solemn concern—till I passed the window, the last aperture through which he could see me. Poor

object of pity and compassion! thought I:—educated in vice and crime, thou knowest not the serene pleasures of virtue and hope, and thy perverted nature must be disciplined in suffering before thou canst enjoy the light of the Divine countenance."

"21.—Heard the sad story of Hall's execution. As I expected, he continued to the last seemingly callous to the moral turpitude and enormity of his crimes, and, of course, without genuine Christian penitence."

He also wrote, at about this time, a series of very good articles for the Trumpet, on "The Society," over the signature of "Paubes," taking the hint from a series entitled "The Pastor," and signed "Cephas."

"Aug. 7.—Attended the commencement exercises at Middletown. In the evening, heard an address from that comet, O. A. Brownson. His subject was, 'Social Reform.' It was handled with great ability, but left his hearers, where he generally does his readers, in doubt as to the real remedy for the evils which he contemplates. The necessity for a reform in the social state was argued: 1. From the fact that on looking at the *actual*, we form instinctively an *ideal* far above it. 2. From the consideration that while for two or

three centuries past, there has been a great increase of the means of physical comfort among industrial nations, there has been a great deterioration in their social and moral condition. A principal cause of this was sought in the separation of the body of wealth, or capital, from labor. The idle are the rich; the industrious are the poor. In considering the question of a remedy, he acknowledged that he felt himself unqualified to answer it.

"Twenty years ago he could have answered it positively, dogmatically, but he had since learned to be more modest! He would, however, pass in review the theories which have been devised for the relief and regeneration of man. 1. The plan which proposes an increase of wages. This he said would not do, because, when universal, it would raise the price, but not the condition, and would therefore be ineffectual. 2. The proposition to cut entirely from the past, and wholly reorganize society: as contemplated by Owen, Fourier, &c. 3. The destruction of all government; and 4. The destruction of all religion. He showed great ingenuity in attacking the weak points of these various theories; but as to a theory of his own, he had none to give.

"He believed, however, that the old system

was the best—that of Christ—the restoration of faith and righteousness in the heart. The great evil of our times is, want of reverence and want of faith in the invisible and the eternal. Religion, he feared, was doing little more for man in this age than it did during the Dark Ages. Then it had a controlling influence over wealth; now wealth governs religion. This is evinced in the building of churches over stores, and in the fact that if a clergyman reproved sin, so as to reduce the income of the society, he would lose his situation. The want of true religion, too, was to be seen in the respect paid to the rich, and the contempt with which the poor was regarded. This feeling should be reversed. We should learn to say with Christ: 'Blessed are ye poor—cursed are ye rich!' Not that we should *hate* the rich; we should *pity* them. 'It is a great misfortune to be rich!'"

"He also saw the want of religion in the little fear which men are getting to have for punishment in hell! The terrors of the broken law, and of eternal judgment, should be preached: for where there is no *fear*, there is no *motive* to obedience! 'The good may be governed by love, but not the wicked!' We thought," adds Sanford, "that he was growing a little wild here, or else that he

was playing a game of cunning to please the mass of religionists! On the whole, we cannot but regard the performance as a strange medley of strong sense and nonsense, and therefore pre-eminently *Brownsonian.*"

In August, he preached the occasional sermon before the Connecticut State Convention of Universalists, and was invited to take charge of the Society in Hudson, N. Y., as its pastor. This invitation, as well as some others, I think, he declined; his sympathies and feelings drawing him strongly toward Massachusetts, and his hopes pointing to a settlement where he could avail himself of the social and religious atmosphere of Boston, and the advantages, if possible, of the admirable Library of Harvard College.

He now took up the study of Geology in a more thorough manner than he had ever before attempted.

"Nov. 29.—Commenced Lyell's Elements of the Science. I find myself in a new field, over which I have hardly before even rambled—and I see at once that it requires careful study for the classification of its particulars."

"30.—I begin to see my way into the several departments of this interesting science, quite as readily as I expected; and the disentombment of

organic remains is like introducing one into a new world. Lyell has been thought to be an infidel. He admits, however, that man's remains are to be found only in what he terms the Post-Pliocene period, and that at least a great part of Europe has been submerged since the commencement of human existence."

"Dec. 2.—I am disappointed at finding this science so capable of intelligible classification and illustration, as it seems to be from these volumes. I have not read a work with deeper interest for a long time. Notwithstanding the alleged infidelity of the author, I find nothing in these volumes which necessarily conflicts with Revelation, except it be his virtual denial of evidence in favor of the commencement of *the earth*; while he admits that *man* and other creatures have had a beginning. I followed him down through the fossiliferous with the most pleasurable interest, expecting that he would come to a period in the disclosed history of the earth; but to my disappointment, though he could trace the marks of organic existence no farther, he expresses the opinion that the period at which it began is not to be reached; and in his subsequent reasoning on the nature, origin, and age of the volcanic and metamorphic rocks, a theory seems to 'peep out,' according to which

the earth, and the types of its living inhabitants, very possibly had no beginning!

"In concluding, he says, 'If we have found it impossible to assign any limit to that time, throughout which it hath pleased an Omnipotent and Eternal Being to manifest his creative power, we have at least succeeded, beyond all hope, in carrying back our researches to a time antecedent to the existence of man.

"'We can prove that man had a beginning, and that all the species now contemporary with man, and many others which preceded, had also a beginning; and that consequently, the present state of the organic world has not gone on from all eternity, as some philosophers have maintained.' This sounds like good Theism."

"Dec. 4.—Concluded reading Silliman's Outlines of Geological Lectures. Do not think they give anything like as clear a view of the science as Lyell does in his 'Elements.' In speaking more confidently of the origin of things, and by referring their creation more frequently to God, he appears to be more of a Christian. In fact, he professes to see no contradiction between the discoveries of this science and the declarations of the Bible. Some of his views with regard to the deluge, however, he will probably have to modify—

if, in fact, he has not already done so, since his work was written—as has been the case with Hitchcock, Buckland, Sedgwick, and others."

"5.—Began Hitchcock's Geology. This science has really more interest in it than any which I have taken up for a long time, and I regret that I have allowed myself to remain comparatively ignorant of it so long, and that I have not an opportunity of studying it under a competent professor."

"6.—Read some in Hitchcock. Commenced writing a sermon, thinking that I must allow my Gospel weapons to become rusty. Subject—The Communication of Moral Life—the object of Christ's Mission."

"7.—Read some, and concluded the sermon, such as it is:—rather a small affair, I think. Indeed, my mind is not in the best mood for sermon-writing, but I think it better to write poor ones than none." He also read Buckland's Bridgewater Treatise, remarking, that if it had not strengthened his conviction of the truth of the Mosaic cosmogony, it had at least given him a more vivid impression of the Divine wisdom and goodness, as displayed in the structure of the various races of beings that once lived and moved on the face of the earth, and whose remains are left imbedded in the folds of her strata. He then

passed to Lyell's "Principles of Geology," a work of which he speaks in the highest terms of praise.

"16.—Read in Lyell. Am charmed with the liquid clearness of his style, and almost alarmed at the comprehensiveness of his views. What can be more admirable than his historical view of the rise and progress of Geology? It is a remarkable fact, that among all the nations of antiquity, the origin of the earth was ascribed to a Divine cause, and its changes and revolutions to the action of two agents, water and fire. In like manner, have not all the traditions of antiquity truth as well as poetry in them?"

Still continuing his studies very closely, he preached most of the time in various places, visiting some societies as a candidate for settlement, and among them, the First Society, in Lynn, Mass. His services here were very well received, and he finally accepted an invitation to remove there and take charge of the society, on the first of January, 1845.

MINISTRY IN LYNN.

"I ENTER upon the duties of this new situation," says he in his Journal, "with deep solicitude, and with earnest prayer that it may prove beneficial both to myself and to my people."

"I find a very different state of things here from that in Connecticut. There, there was too much conservatism: here, too much radicalism: especially as manifested in Come-outer-ism, the most radical of all the *isms* with which I was ever acquainted." This last remark was made after he had been in the place long enough to notice, with some care, its peculiarities, as a kind of rallying-point for all the outlandish visionaries,—social and religious, or rather anti-religious—of that region.

He had now attained an age, and an experience, which gave distinctness and strength to his views, tone and direction to his feelings, stability and elevation to his character; and had added materially to his qualifications for his position, and the work that lay before him. The condition of things in Lynn was, at this time, somewhat peculiar, and in some respects unfavorable to his success as a

Christian minister. He was a devout and reverent lover of the Bible.* He loved the plain, simple truths of the Gospel. He believed them to be "the power of God unto salvation." And although these facts endeared him to the larger and better portion of the people of his congregation, they served by no means to recommend him to the remainder. These had grown wiser. A kind of mongrel rationalism, made up of Parkerism and water, had been left among them by his predecessor, Rev. H. G. Smith, of which he was ignorant at the time he agreed to take charge of the society. In fact, when the vote was taken inviting him, many of this class were for attempting to have Mr. Smith return, being strongly in favor of his peculiar opinions. Indeed, so unfavorable was the condition of affairs in this and other similar respects, that I seriously doubt whether a man of very ordinary powers and qualifications could have sustained himself for any length of time, commencing when he did. But, notwithstanding these circumstances, his labors were attended with a good

* "I am, and I must be, an ardent lover of the Bible. I would not exchange it for all the systems of philosophy which the ingenuity of human wisdom has ever formed. I love the Bible for what it teaches of God, his nature and character; and, if possible, I love it more for what it reveals of man, human nature, duty, and destiny."—*Extract from a Sermon.*

degree of success, and the number of his friends was doubtless far greater at the close than at the commencement of his ministry among them. His congregations were quite large; the friends active and zealous; the church was newly painted *in fresco*, the Sabbath-school reorganized, and a gradual but healthy growth seemed to have truly began.

There is a characteristic allusion, in his Journal at this period, to some objections made to his manner of speaking. "April 3.—In returning home with a member of my society, I was told that I should be liked very much if I had more energy in my delivery. *Energy!*—whether it is *noise* or mental activity that is wanted, I do not know. Poor fellow that I am! I cannot well feign what I do not feel; I cannot easily put on the appearance of devotion and earnestness—such, I mean, as stupidity looks for—when I am in 'a calm and heavenly frame.' I *do* hate to rage and foam in the sacred desk, much as it is liked by the multitude!" For some months from this date, I find little in his history that demands particular notice. Amidst alternate clouds and sunshine, such as usually make up the great body of human life, he seems to have toiled on very perseveringly, and withal very happily. Once more he had emphatically a *home*—a domestic retreat

to which he could fly from cares and trials without, soothing and strengthening his spirit in the arms of sympathy and love. He still read much, and though he had a large quantity of manuscripts on hand, he continued his sermon-writing, preparing generally one, and often two discourses per week, besides many of his best and most labored efforts for the press, in addition to a few literary and scientific lectures. We commence his Journal again, with—

"May 25th, 1846.—For the last six months or so, I have neglected to keep a record of my labors and affairs, partly because I could not procure a book such as I wanted for the purpose; partly because of mere neglect; and then, again, partly because I have had but little important matter to record. For the most part, things with me and mine have passed along in a quiet and prosperous way. Among those which have interested me most, may be mentioned the following, (leaving, of course, domestic affairs out of the account):

"1. During the early part of the winter, I had the satisfaction of hearing Charles Lyell, Esq., in a course of lectures on Geology, before the Lowell Institute, Boston. Though not exceedingly interesting as a speaker, he was clear in his arrangement, choice in his language, familiar with his sub-

ject, and, withal, distinct in his enunciation. He has a handsome figure, large and well-proportioned head, and a bright and sparkling, though not prominent, blue eye. The first lecture in which I heard him was devoted to an inquiry into the botany of the carboniferous era. Many complained of its dryness, but to me it was exceedingly interesting. The second which I heard, and which I think was the ninth of his course, was on the geographical distribution of fossil organic life. The third, which was his twelfth and last, was the conclusion of what he had to say on the same subject.

"In this lecture, he dwelt on the geological evidence of the comparatively low antiquity of the human race. In adverting to the question in regard to the probable birth-place of mankind, he remarked, that one of the Humboldts, from the study of ethnography, has rendered it extremely probable that they commenced their being in the northern part of Asia. In closing, he recapitulated the grounds over which he had gone, and insisted that the causes which, in the course of long ages, have wrought such great changes in both inorganic and organic nature, are still in full and undiminished activity. 'If there are any,' were very nearly his words, 'who conclude that the

clock has stopped because they are not able to hear its ticking, or see the motion of the hands upon its face, it is because their observations have not extended beyond a single zoological era; and though the earth could be struck out of existence in a moment by the Power that formed it, it wears no proofs of decay or dissolution.'

"2. During the winter, I prepared and delivered a course of five lectures on the science of Geology, in its relations to natural and revealed religion. They cost me a great amount of labor, but the gratification which the study and results afforded was a sufficient compensation. The second lecture—on fossil organic remains—I delivered before the Lynn Nat. Hist. Society.

"3. Some four weeks since, I attended the Inauguration of Edward Everett, as President of Harvard University. His oration, or address, I regarded, all things considered, as the most *truly eloquent* production to which I ever listened. The ease, grace, and appropriateness of his manner were perfectly astonishing. His allusions to Webster, who was present, drew down thundering applause. I was never before so deeply impressed with the sense of the omnipotence of eloquence."

His 4th specification refers to certain proceedings had by the friends of Rev. Mr. Smith, his

predecessor, to obtain the church for him to preach in. The sum of its effects were to stir up still greater excitement and division in the Society; though, I believe, that few, if any, of the more influential members left Sanford to join Smith. He then proceeds to specification

"5. Within two weeks, a war has broken out between Mexico and the United States, in consequence of the annexation of Texas! Most sad to think of! * * * Our Government has appropriated ten millions of dollars, and ordered into the field 50,000 men, to carry on the war. The late 'victory' was celebrated among us by raising the American flag and the discharge of cannon!! O God! may these bloody scenes have a speedy end!"

"Last week, besides making a number of calls, I wrote two sermons; one on 'Christ's Sermon on the Mount;' the other on 'The Enemies of Christ put under his Feet,' reckoning *war* among the number."

"June 19.—Yesterday I attended the services at the dedication of the Universalist Church, in Beverly, and the installation of Brother J. L. Stevens, as Pastor of the Society. Rev. S. Cobb gave the sermon on the first occasion, and Rev. H. Ballou 2d on the second. Everything seemed

of the right kind until Rev. J. Prince came to give the Address to the Society, when a whole hour was devoted to an attack upon the miraculous in Christianity, in the style of Parkerism, as the Americanized system of German Rationalism is called in this quarter. To say nothing of the erroneousness of the sentiments he advocated, the effort was entirely out of place, and was plainly received with much disapprobation. When he got through, Mr. Ballou arose, and in a very decided, yet kind and tender manner, expressed his dissent from the views which had been announced. He probably felt under stronger obligation to do so, from the fact that many members of other sects were present."

It was ascertained during the summer that the pecuniary affairs of the Society were not in a very flourishing condition, and Sanford addressed it a note upon the subject, expressing his suspicion that much of this was owing to the influence which the friends of his predecessor, Mr. Smith, had exerted.

Two or three meetings were held to consider the subject, and the result is found in the following letter:—

"To Rev. Merritt Sanford:

"At an adjourned meeting of the members

and others, who desire the prosperity of the First Universalist Society, held after Divine service yesterday afternoon, the following Resolution was adopted by ballot:—

"*Resolved*, That in our present pastor we are united; that his devotion to the cause and to the best interests of the Society has been unceasing, while the present condition of our financial concerns is by no means attributable to his ministry, but is easily traced to other causes.

"Whole number of ballots, 77
"Yeas 66
"Nays 11

"*Voted*, That the Clerk be requested to forward to Brother Sanford the Resolution, and the vote on the same.

"JAMES M. SARGEANT, Clerk."

This was early in October, and the following remarks concerning it are from his Journal:—

"Considering all things, I must say that I am somewhat surprised at the vote in my favor, it is so much larger than when I was called to the pastorship of the Society. On ascertaining the facts, I find that I had hardly twenty votes in the majority at that time; twenty-five voting for Mr. Smith on the last ballot. This I did not know

then, but have perceived all along that I had a strong influence to work against. I am thankful to Heaven that there is now so fair a prospect of getting rid of the influence of his dispensation. I have had a trial, and now hope to come forth purified."

During the fall he succeeded in organizing a church in connection with his Society, and aided much in establishing the "Lynn Mechanics' Lyceum," and obtaining a course of lectures for the winter.

"Jan. 1, 1847.—Another New Year! It seems but as yesterday that 1846 commenced; and should health and prosperity continue, 1848 will come before we are aware of it. But it is of little use to moralize. *To act*, in doing something of utility or virtue, is far more important."

A course of lectures addressed to the young was prepared and delivered through the winter, and in the spring he commenced the study of the Latin language, aided only by his brother, who came to reside with him and attend school.

He also preached an excellent occasional sermon before the Massachusetts State Convention, and prepared for the Universalist Quarterly an able and valuable article on the "Archæology of the Earth and its Inhabitants."

"July 13.—Last week was almost wholly given to the study of Latin, writing but about one sermon. In Latin I am making rather slow, but, I think, sure progress. Have just got fairly into the Reader. I like it very much, and even if I did not, I should be encouraged to proceed, so strong is my desire to be able to read a few rare and important works in the language; particularly Cicero's De Natura Deorum and De Finibis, and Pliny's Natural History."

"19.—Brother John Moore passed last night with us, having preached to the Second Society yesterday. It is believed that an effort is making to get him at that part of the town. For the Society's sake, I could wish he would come, but for his sake I could desire that he might keep away!"

In September he wrote another admirable article for the Universalist Quarterly on the Scripture Doctrine of Creation; and in the early part of October announced to his Society that, in consequence chiefly of the disadvantages he had labored under from the want of union in it, and the opposition he still had to meet from the peculiar friends of Mr. Smith, it was his intention to close his pastoral labors there with the ending of the year. December 26, he preached his farewell sermon in Lynn. The officers of the Society gave him a very

complimentary letter, and he continued to supply the desk during the winter by way of exchange. The following is a more detailed account of his reasons for leaving there:

"The causes which have operated to bring about the close of my labors in Lynn may be said to be these: 1. The love of novelty and change in the place. For this Lynn has been long and widely celebrated; and after living here three years, I am able to say that it has come honestly by the reputation. The people are quick to fall in love with a man, and equally quick in falling out of it. This has operated to make the stay of ministers short.

"2. The peculiar half-revolutionary state of things in the Society, as left by my predecessor. And this, in my view, has been the most influential circumstance of all. On coming here, I found a large number who were not only greatly in favor of his infidel radicalism, but seemed to feel a kind of spite toward the rest of the Society for not joining them in efforts to get him back. This party has violently opposed me ever since I have been here.

"3. In some instances I have given unintentional offence in my preaching—in disowning some views in respect to the future state—maintaining that death produces no change in the character, and

that man enters the immortal world in the same moral state in which he leaves the present life. It may be poor *policy* to preach this doctrine, but I believe that duty, that *principle*, requires its distinct enunciation.*

* I regret to say that misapprehension seemed to exist in some minds with regard to the ground which Mr. Sanford occupied upon this subject. The writer has had an opportunity of *knowing* something of his views, having been very intimate with him from his youth up. Almost his entire religious experience, as well as the few modifications that occurred in his opinions, were the subject of frequent and unreserved communication between us. Most of these modifications I have already hinted at, and they were comparatively trifling at most. True, his views of the resurrection, and of the moral connection between the present and the future state, differed a little from those held by a large and respectable class in the denomination; and it is equally true that they were very nearly in agreement with those held by another class. Besides the means of information derived from the most frank personal correspondence, I have examined the great body of his manuscripts, and his private journal, and unhesitatingly affirm that he was a strong, *unwavering Universalist*. I never heard the first word from his lips, or saw the first from his pen, which indicated a *doubt* even in regard to a single point of faith that the Universalist body would deem of very great importance.

I make these remarks not only because I deem them just, but because we have a small band of enemies—*small* every way—who would like very well to see unpleasant differences among us. One of them, in a very complimentary notice of Sanford in the "Christian Herald," intimates that, "as a Theologian, he was regarded by some of his brethren as 'rather too Orthodox.'"

"To these should doubtless be added two other causes. Some have not liked the simplicity of my manner, having a taste for a more noisy style; and the Society has labored under a debt, so as to render it difficult to meet its expenses."

During the remainder of the winter he pursued his studies with unwearied industry, spending most of his time on the Latin. He found great difficulty, however, from the want of a regular and competent instructor; and made some inquiries as to the terms on which he could spend a season in Harvard College.

The time demanded for preparation, however, was greater than he could afford, and after following up his Latin, with such aids as he could obtain, till early in March, he took hold of the Greek with the most indomitable resolution. The summer was almost entirely taken up with the study of these two languages; in which, considering his want of assistance, he made rapid progress.

He had reached the 10th book of the Eneid, and was prepared to begin the Greek Reader, when, early in September, he left with his wife for Vermont, where they spent among their friends something over two months, returning to Portland, Ct., in November, to spend the winter with his father-

in-law, and prosecute his studies there, aided by Rev. Mr. Emery, the Rector of the Episcopal Church.

"March 4th, 1849.—I continue steadily at work on my studies. Have recited to Mr. Emery twice a week for two months. I like him quite well as a teacher, though I continually feel that he would be of greater service to me if he were familiar with Sophocles' Grammar. It is, this week, just a year since I commenced in Greek. I have found it hard digging, I confess, but I have not yet had a momentary feeling of repentance for commencing it, and I do not know but what I ought to be satisfied with my progress. In Jacobs' Reader I have read 72 pp., ending with 'Natural History;' and in Arnold's Greek Composition, I have advanced 60 pp., and I feel that I have been doing a good work in the Grammar. In Latin, I have finished Sallust, and just commenced on Cicero's Select Orations."

But his time on earth was now rapidly drawing to a close. Though in the enjoyment of perfect health, and ardently engaged in acquiring the means of still greater usefulness, his labors, trials, and enjoyments here were about over. Early in the spring he had made engagements with the Universalist Society in Warren, Mass., to assume

its pastoral charge; and while preparing to remove there, was exposed, while on a visit to Boston, to that disease he had so long dreaded—the measles. Still thinking that he might escape an attack, as he had before done under similar exposures, he made no mention of the fact to his family and friends in Portland, but went alone to Warren, where he was taken suddenly on Sunday, April 22d. On the day previous, feeling, as he feared, some of the premonitory symptoms of illness, he sent for his wife, who arrived the same evening. On Sunday he became delirious, and remained so until the following Thursday, when he expired. His remains were taken to his native town, a funeral discourse delivered by Rev. H. F. Ballou, and there, amidst the scenes of his childhood, on the banks of that little streamlet where he had then played, they laid him, with many tears, to sleep by the side of his early wife and child!

The following is extracted from a brief notice of his death, which appeared in the Trumpet and Universalist Magazine, of May 5th, under the editorial care of Rev. Thos. Whittemore:—

"We feel no ordinary emotions of grief in announcing the death of Bro. Merritt Sanford, late pastor of the First Universalist Society in Lynn,

Mass. * * * * He was a man of sound mind, a fine writer, and a good preacher. He died at Warren, Mass., on Thursday of last week (26th April), at eleven o'clock, A. M., in the 37th year of his age. He had recently entered into an engagement to preach to the Universalist Society in that town; and after supplying the pulpit for two or three Sundays, he was attacked by a very dangerous disorder, called by some the black measles. He was sick only six days. The best of attention was paid him; it was not in the power of man to do anything more than was done; but all was of no avail. The sickness was unto death —the hand of God was in the event. Much as we regret the loss of our beloved friend and brother, and much as we feel that our ministry has been deprived of one of its brightest ornaments, we still can say, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.'"

The following extracts are taken from the notice published in the "Christian Herald"—the organ, I believe, of the sect of *Christians*—and to which reference was made in a note on a previous page:—

"The death of Rev. Merritt Sanford, for two or three years pastor of the (1st) Universalist Society

in Lynn, is announced in the Trumpet of last week. * * * * I was acquainted with this gentleman, and cannot but mingle a tear of sympathy with his afflicted companion and family friends. Mr. Sanford was a gentleman of talent and general intelligence, and manifested an active spirit of philanthropy. * * * * He was much respected as a good citizen and an active philanthropist by his neighbors and acquaintances in Lynn."

As soon as the news of his death reached his former parishioners in Lynn, it called out the following earnest and warm expression of their sympathy and respect (I quote from the Trumpet):—

"Bro. Whittemore:—At the close of Divine service, yesterday afternoon, the following preamble and resolutions were unanimously passed by the First Universalist Society of this place:—

"*Whereas*, it has pleased the Universal Father, in the plenitude of His wisdom, to remove our late pastor and well-beloved brother, Merritt Sanford, from the scene of his earthly labors, to cut him down in the midst of life, and an extended sphere of usefulness: Therefore,

"*Resolved*, That we recognize in Bro. Sanford one of the brightest ornaments of society; a faithful, talented, and useful minister; a tender and

devoted husband; and an affectionate and beloved brother and friend.

"*Resolved*, That we cherish his memory with sentiments of profound esteem and affection, that we deeply sympathize with his afflicted companion and relatives in their sad bereavement, and tender to them the assurance of our sincere sympathy and condolence, and commend them to that Gospel which he both preached and adorned by his life, for the consolation they so much need in this their hour of trial.

"*Resolved*, That a copy of these resolutions, signed by the Trustees and Clerk of this Society, be forwarded to Mrs. Sanford, and that they be published in the 'Trumpet' and 'Christian Freeman.'

"GUSTAVUS ATWILL,
GEO. W. LORD,
NATHL. BLANCHARD,
ALANSON BURRILL,
EDMUND PERRY,
C. W. TODD,
JOB C. WAIT,
} Trustees.

"JAMES M. SARGEANT, Clerk."

Thus lived, and passed away, in the vigor of early manhood, one who is believed to have had as many virtues and as few faults as can well be

expected from our frail humanity. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." Amen.

SERMONS.

AFFLICTION.

"Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward."—*Job* v., 6, 7.

I UNDERSTAND by this language, that human suffering is not accidental but natural; not the product of chance, but the appointment of the Creator; and that, severe and protracted as may be man's sufferings in the furnace of affliction, its fires are kindled and tempered by the Hand that made him, and for the purpose of purifying and elevating his nature.

This lesson is what we should all be solicitous to learn. The more I see of the affairs of human life; of its short and deceitful pleasures, and of the burdens which are laid upon human shoulders, the deeper is my conviction that man knows nothing—nothing of himself and of the true end of his being, till he has learned this lesson—till he has learned that he is born to experience the trials and sorrows of adversity, as well as the ease and pleas-

ure of prosperity; and that it is absolutely necessary to his growth and welfare, as an intellectual and moral being; and though this may be thought by some to be a sad reflection, it is to me a sadder one, that his nature is so weak, that he hardly ever learns this lesson until fortune frowns upon him, and he drinks of the bitter draught which Providence pours into the cup of mortals. 'And the consideration that he there learns this truth; that he generally comes forth from the furnace with higher thoughts and purer feelings, removes all sad and sorrowing reflections from my mind, and enables me to look upon all the pains and groans of this suffering world with resignation, almost with joy. My experience, I know, has not been long, but it has been full of meaning. The morning of my days was bright and full of promise. The heavens were garnished with stars, and the earth was strewed with flowers; and I walked forth in the vivacity and vigor of youth, looked upon the beautiful world that lay before me, and I more than half said to myself, "These heavens shall never lose their brightness; these flowers shall never wither, and life will be to me an unbroken round of prosperity and felicity." The word adversity I indeed read in books, and my teachers told me that this is a world which is

swept by the storms, and visited with the frosts of disappointment and suffering; but that word I did not understand, because those storms and frosts I had not experienced. Possessed of vigorous health and joyful spirits, and surrounded by friends who had hung over my cradle, and by at least *one* other who stood ready to sacrifice care and even life to my comfort and welfare, "in my prosperity," I almost said, "I shall never be moved." But years have taught me another lesson. Providence has told me what meaning there is in the word adversity. The heavens have been darkened by tempests, and the earth has been rudely swept by winds and storms. The tenderest and strongest ties of my nature have been sundered, and the grave has closed over the sweetest and loveliest beings which Heaven has yet given me "to bless the present scene." But, thanks to the goodness of the Creator, and to the influence of the Gospel of his grace, I mourn not without hope. For a while, however, I thought the blow too severe, and my poor, feeble nature almost sunk beneath the load—though there was no period when Christianity did not speak comfort to my troubled heart; but I can now say, and I believe without exaggeration, that "it is good for me that I have been afflicted." If I know myself, I

have acquired new strength, and the most valuable strength, from the burdens which have been laid upon me. I have been led to think more of myself, of God, and of Christianity, and to feel more the ties which bind me to my race, and of the obligations under which I am placed to sympathize with them, and try to minister to their welfare. In particular, I have been led to consider the intentions of the Creator in making man a subject of suffering, and I have learned, at least to my satisfaction, that he is in greater danger from prosperity than he is from adversity; and that all the sufferings of this world are ordered in mercy, and that they are exercising man's powers, elevating his conceptions and feelings, and conducting him onward and upward, to the glory and perfection of his nature. Accordingly, I now look upon the world, not, indeed, with that thoughtless gayety and pleasure in which I gazed upon it in earlier life, but with higher conceptions, and, I will say, a sublimer joy. I have not ceased to see suffering around me, and I have not lost a heart to weep over it; but I think I have learned its *purpose*. I see it in the hand of an infinite Father; and I see how he uses it to discipline and elevate his children. I have therefore ceased to fear it, and my only concern now is, that I may bear its inflictions

with patience, and with a clear view of the great purpose for which it is administered.

My hearers will pardon this allusion to myself, because it is made not only to give you a short chapter from the book of human experience, but to hold up before you the object of the present discourse. I wish to teach others the lessons I have learned. Words, I know, are poor things; precept, and even example, are often powerless in their influence; because the majority of mankind will learn wisdom from nothing but from the cold and icy hand of suffering. And the solemn fact that I am surrounded by sufferers, that there are those who have drank of the bitter waters of adversity, encourages me to speak; and I have great hope that I shall succeed in my efforts to convince such that the ministry of affliction is the ministry of benevolence; in other words, I have hope that such will bear witness that I am not dealing in fiction, or mere theory, when I speak of the beneficial influence of adversity. The pampered and spoiled children of worldly prosperity, those who have lived in perpetual ease and pleasure, and who have not yet been made to wrestle with difficulty and sorrow, will have but a dull ear and a doubting heart while I speak on this subject, and they will doubtless think it an unprofitable

theme; but I am sure that in the hearts of the suffering and the unfortunate there are cords which will vibrate to the sentiments which I utter, and that they will bless God for making this world a mixed scene of pleasure and pain, in proportion as they have weighed and felt the several elements which enter into the composition of human life.

Of the fact that suffering enters largely into life, and that no mortal can long escape the approach of adversity, I need not speak, except for the information—if, indeed, they will receive it—of the young, the inexperienced, or the thoughtless. This world, I know, is a good one. was made by a Being who knew what he was about, and I doubt not that his wisdom, directed by his benevolence, has adapted all its parts to the nature and welfare of its inhabitants. I look upon it, not as a gloomy prison, filled with the victims of divine hatred and wrath, but as a glorious theatre, occupied by the offspring of infinite and impartial goodness. The great dramatist has well said,

> "All the world's a stage,
> And all the men and women merely players:
> They have their exits, and their entrances;
> And one man, in his time, plays many parts."

Ah! yes, there are "many parts" played

this theatre; and he who has not learned that tragedy, as truly as comedy, enters largely into its drama, has not seen more than the first scene. As spring is the most lovely season in the year, youth is the happiest period in the history of man. Manhood brings its cares, and old age its burdens. I have no disposition to induce gloom in a single mind, by holding up the dark side of life's picture; but we had better see the truth, if it is not so agreeable, than to be the dupes of error. I give you the word which came from heaven, and which the history of the earth has confirmed. "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth." "Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not." "For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth a little while, and then vanisheth away." "Men dwell in houses of clay; their foundation is in the dust; they are crushed before the moth." "One dieth in the fullness of his strength, being wholly at ease and quiet. His breasts are full of milk, and his bones moistened with marrow. Another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth

with pleasure. They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them." "The mighty are exalted for a little while; but are gone and brought low; they are taken out of the way as all others, and cut off as the tops of the ears of corn." "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle." "I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the place appointed for all living." "Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

Solemn this may be, my friends, but it is true. The history of six thousand years has proved it. Disease, pain, and death have preyed upon every form that has trod our earth, and deposited their ashes in its bosom. And there is nothing in all this world which is permanent and unfading. There is no dwelling, no palace, though its foundation be granite, and its walls be adamant, which shall not yield to the touch of time, and be laid even with the ground. And there is no family, sweet and strong as are the ties which bind its members together, and be there ever so much beauty and wealth, which will not be separated by the hand of the Destroying Angel, and be made the common food of the worm of corruption.

"The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,

Yea, all which it inhabit, shall dissolve,
And like this unsubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a wreck behind."

And what is the cause of all this change, decay, and suffering? A cause there certainly is, whether man find it, or not, and whether he is satisfied with it, or not. What is it? Is it chance? Philosophy tells us that there is no such thing in the universe, and every thinking mind, it would seem, must grant the correctness of her conclusion. Order, design, and law—these are written all over creation. He who does not see them is blind to everything in Nature, and he might as well deny the existence of the universe itself. Every form of inanimate and animate existence has its distinct and appropriate laws; and where there is law, there is no possibility of chance. It would be as proper to talk of a discord in a harmony. "Nature never makes mistakes," was the saying of a wise man; and the reason is, because she is under the dominion of laws throughout all her works. If she produces earthquakes and volcanoes, or what we may regard as dreadful accidents, it is not because there is chance in her operations, but because she acts in obedience to laws beyond our feeble comprehension. And it is so in the ruptures and sufferings which take place

in human life. There is nothing accidental—nothing like chance, in them. Laws preside over them all, and who will deny that they take place according to the will and appointment of that infinite Lawgiver, who balanced the machinery of the universe, and gave to it all its laws? Perhaps I shall be told that man's afflictions and sufferings come upon him for disregarding, or transgressing, the laws of the Creator. It may be argued, that every law of God is benevolent in its nature, and that it has enjoyment for its object, and, consequently, that all human suffering results from transgressing the laws which the Creator has established. I freely admit that there is much philosophy, much truth, in this. I see that the young die, because some violence is done to the laws of their existence; and I see that health can be promoted, life prolonged, and enjoyment augmented, by learning and obeying the laws which are interwoven with the human economy. But may we not look further? Who made these laws, and did He not foresee the manner in which they would be treated? Did not His eye run along the whole course of humanity, and were not the transgressions, which would result from the action of His laws, as truly present to His mind as the laws themselves? And if so, and especially as

He fixed the *conditions* from which the transgressions would flow, did He not virtually ordain them, and absolutely provide for their results? I see not how an affirmative answer to these questions can be avoided. And there is another view to be taken of this matter. God could have ordained all the changes, afflictions, separations, and, if you please, all the transgressions, which take place among men, without the production of pain, sorrow, and lamentation, had He so willed. He could have given man nerves of iron and a heart of stone, so that he could have passed through all life's changes without feeling the touch of pain, and buried his kindred, and gone himself down to the gates of death, without shedding a tear or heaving a sigh. But He did not so will—He has not so done. He has given man both a frame and a soul, which are tenderly alive at every pore. His physical powers and sensations are far more tender and acute than those of the brute creation below him, and the consequence is, that he knows more of disease, pain, and suffering. And then, think of his mental sensibility, and mental sorrow. O! how many and deep are the fountains which, easily disturbed, send forth bitter waters from within him! His reason, how often is it mocked in its attempts to rise to the comprehension of

truth, and sinks back upon itself, in doubt, in darkness, sometimes in despair! His social feelings—feelings which require him to seek the companionship and love of his race, and bind him in bonds of gentleness to his kindred and friends: alas! how often are they made to bleed over unrequited love, over disappointment and bereavement! His moral affections—affections which give him ideas of right and duty, of justice and benevolence,—how they plead with him to keep on the even tenor of his way, and go not in the path of sin, and how do they upbraid him and torment him, when he finds himself in the way of evil! And his religious instincts and aspirations—instincts and aspirations which impel him to seek and feel after his Maker, "if haply he might find Him," and to look upward to a happy immortality as the true end and good of his being,—and how they minister to his inward pain, and degradation, and despair, even when he does not find the true God, and the hope of a blissful future! And in his present natural state of imperfection and weakness, how can he avoid these errors, and free himself from all these unhappy results?

Here, then, we find that reason and nature join revelation in teaching that affliction, adversity, suffering, has its origin in the will and appointment

of God. There is nothing accidental, and nothing merely mechanical or material in its cause. "Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground." Its fires are kindled by the hand of the Maker. "Man is *born* unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." It is the natural result of the nature which is conferred upon him, and it is an essential element in the purpose of his being. In giving him his acute sensations and exquisite sensibilities, God has opened, so to speak, fountains of pain and sorrow in every fibre and pore of his physical and mental nature; and the changes and reverses of Providence with which he has diversified the journey which he takes in his passage through this nether world, doubly proves that his afflictions and sufferings are ordained by the Being that made him.

This brings us to the main business of the present discourse—to inquire into the object or purpose for which man is made a subject of affliction and suffering. Why has God opened inlets of pain and sorrow within him, and why does He lead him through so many difficulties, trials, and sufferings? This is a great, though a very natural question. The sufferer has asked it, as he has turned himself in agony upon the bed of sickness; and the philosopher has asked it, as he has sur-

veyed the world, and beheld the sufferings which abound in it.

If we turn to the Scriptures for an answer, we get one which is at once worthy the character of God and the reception of man. We are there told, on almost every page, that man is visited with suffering, not to gratify and satiate the hatred and wrath of his Maker, nor because he is doomed to bear the evils of his state for the sin of his first parents, but to quicken and elevate his own nature—to discipline and strengthen his intellectual and moral powers, and to give him moral energy and spiritual perfection through its severe and faithful ministry. "Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out a far more exceeding, eternal weight of glory." "No chastening for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby." "Ye shall weep and lament, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." "Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning." I need not multiply these divine, sweet assurances. They are scattered over the whole field of revelation, and every one who has made himself familiar with the sacred writings will bear me witness, that the cause of affliction is

there always ascribed to the goodness of God and to his interest in the welfare of his creatures, and that it is declared to be inflicted for the purpose of correcting and elevating them.

Can we learn this lesson, my friends? From observation, experience, and reflection, can we so lift up our thoughts, that we can see the goodness of God in His making man a child of sorrow, and kiss the rod when we bear its stripes? So weak is our nature, we may not be able to do this in every instance of suffering which we witness or experience; but, if we will withdraw our minds from the glare and noise of the world, and think of the condition of human nature, and of the relative influence of prosperity and of adversity upon it, I am sure we shall come to the conclusion that affliction is as the refiner's fire to silver in its influence on man, and we shall see reasons for blessing God in his darkest dispensations.

The common argument in vindication of the goodness of God in human suffering is, that the amount of enjoyment is greater than that of pain. This is a good argument, because it is founded in truth. Yes; it is a glorious truth, that, great and trying as are the pains and sorrows of this world, the amount of happiness is far, almost infinitely, greater. For one tear there are a thousand smiles,

and for one day of mourning there are whole years of rejoicing. There is so much truth in this, that when we hear the notes of gladness and enjoyment, they scarcely fix our attention, they are so common; and when we hear the tones of sadness and suffering, we turn that way with wonder and surprise, so uncommon in the aggregate are such tones in the music of this world's experience. Happiness is the rule, misery the exception. This is a verity, and it clearly demonstrates the goodness of the Creator and Ruler of our world. But still, there is suffering in it. It has written its lines on almost every countenance. Its wails come to us from the mourning, and its groans from the dying. How can God be good in permitting or sending it? My friends, this has been deemed a very hard question, but I think we can all easily answer it, if we will look into the nature of the being who is the sufferer. What is the purpose of his being? Not merely to *enjoy*, but to *grow*—to advance in knowledge and virtue, to develop his intellectual and moral powers, and to rise to true greatness—the greatness of moral excellence, by an exposure to difficulty, danger, and suffering. I suppose that God could have made the trees and the rocks happy, and filled every pore of them with enjoyment, but I know not how he could have made

man a being of intellectual and moral value—in other words, how he could have raised up a being from nothingness and dust to the heights of knowledge and moral excellence, without subjecting him to danger, hardship, and suffering. He could, as he does, make him *innocent*, without this severe process, but not *virtuous*. Virtue, moral excellence—the true end and glory of man, is not a communicated thing: it is the mind's own act and work, and it is in the field of trial, and conflict, and sorrow, that it is formed.

The world thinks little of it, but it is true, that man's true glory fades and dies,—or it *would* fade and die, in the perpetual sunshine of favor and enjoyment. Prosperity,—alas! the prosperity that he courts so much, kills him. He cannot bear it. Give him wealth, and he becomes proud. Give him power, and he corrupts it, aye, corrupts himself, and tyrannizes over his species. But God knows how to humble him. God understands his frame, he remembers that he is dust, and he visits him with reverses, trials, conflicts, bereavements, sufferings. And what do they do to him? Frequently they make his heart stoop, indeed, and in a few cases, we grant, they crush him to the earth, but they constitute a burden which it is good for him to bear. They exercise his powers, and there-

by multiply his strength; they arouse his attention to a thoughtfulness and study of his condition and true interests, humble his pride, subdue his stubbornness, chasten and refine his social and moral feelings, giving him a heart more alive to the wants of his fellow-pilgrims, and more ready to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to weep with them that weep, and schooling his whole nature to the love of that virtue and the observance of those laws which are the true end and real good of his being.

Be patient, my hearers, yet a little while, and I will specify and briefly illustrate some of the particular benefits which flow to mankind from the influence of adversity. There is no need that I speak of the blessings of prosperity, because these are comprehended; but it is not so easy for men to see that adversity teems with blessings to the children of men, and therefore there may be need that a word or two be spoken in their behalf.

1. Adversity does much for the acquirement and promotion of knowledge. Mankind have a natural love of ease, and were it not for the influence of pain and suffering, they would be a race of stupid, ignorant, degraded creatures. The terrible fury of the tornado and the awful noise of

the earthquake may be thought to be dreadful discords in the music of nature, but if we had an ear which took in all the sounds which make up the great harmony of the universe, we should doubtless understand that the most fearful tones are, we might say, the most necessary, inasmuch as they are the only effectual means by which mankind can be kept awake to their true good. If we should look over the history of nations, we could hardly fail to discover that the fearful judgments and calamities which Providence has brought down upon them, have had a mighty influence on them for good, in calling the attention of the people to their real condition, and in causing them to use the means in their power to become acquainted with the sources of greatness and happiness. And we can all see that this is the effect of adversity in the common walks of life. How often do we see the thoughtless and the giddy turned into serious and anxious inquirers after the path of virtue and the light of hope,—by some instance of suffering, by the approach of sickness or death! And how much would our physicians and physiologists have known of the human frame, and of the laws which govern the human system, if there had been no disease and pain? Very little—very little indeed, in our opinion. The fact is, and it is one

which should lead us to see a grand purpose in the existence of suffering in the present system, that the whole stock of knowledge which modern science gives of the nature of man has grown out of his sufferings; for had he not suffered, there could have been no motive, higher than curiosity, to study his nature, and his sufferings have answered the purpose of revealing the laws and purposes of his nature, in the same way that the laws of anything are most visibly revealed by the consequences which follow a departure from them.

One purpose, then, for which suffering is inflicted upon man, is to keep him from mental stupidity, to fix and confine his attention on serious and important matters, and thereby to increase the amount of his knowledge; and could we see how much has been done for both the progress of science and the progress of Christianity by the influence of pain and sorrow, we should thank God that he sends storms as well as the sunshine.

2. Adversity does much for the cultivation of *the social affections and virtues.* Indeed, affliction is the only school in which these divine plants can have a healthy growth and come to perfection. Enter the most virtuous family where there has been nothing but prosperity,—where abundance, health, and almost unbroken enjoyment have reign-

ed,—and you will find a good degree of order and peace, indeed, but you would find also, if you have eyes which can penetrate the surface of things, fretful and irritable dispositions—an easy willingness to find fault and pass condemnation, and very little will be known of the highest social virtues, such as pity, compassion, and forbearance. But let the angel of adversity visit that family, and lay one of its members upon the bed of sickness, and a diviner influence will immediately commence its work among them. All their little rivalries, contentions, and animosities will be hushed, repented of, and forgiven, and they will watch with breathless anxiety around the couch of the sufferer, to see if they cannot do something to relieve or comfort him, if it be no more than to show him that their hearts beat in pain with his; and whether he lives or dies, they will derive from this scene a spirit which will be of greater benefit to them than a whole lifetime of ease and pleasure. There will be more tenderness and strength in their affections, a greater readiness to feel each other's sorrows, and to minister to each other's welfare, and a deeper and broader sympathy toward their neighbors. And so it is, not with one family merely, but all over the world. The social virtues do not thrive in the sunshine of continual prosperi-

ty. Peevishness, pride, and hatred will grow there in rich abundance; but if you would seek for sweet and strong sympathies, for hearts quick to feel every want and weep over every pain, and for all the offices of tenderness, compassion, and undying love, go where adversity has reigned—where darkness hath brooded—where storms have raged —where frosts have blighted, and done dreadful havoc with beauty, and loveliness, and affection. In this spirit the great Spurzheim chose for his wife a woman who had experienced great suffering, believing that her social nature had been refined and exalted by what she had suffered; and the result verified the correctness of his opinion. And we are certified that suffering was one of the elements in forming the perfection of Jesus Christ; for it is written, "The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering." And should we expect to become perfect in either social or moral virtue, without suffering? No, we cannot spare the influence of pain, bereavement, and sorrow. If we truly know ourselves, we would rather spare everything else. The voices which speak to us in the sick chamber and in the grave-yard, are solemn indeed, but they breathe an influence which is stronger in behalf of virtue than all the other voices which we hear. For what is the language which

they convey to the heart? What sentiments do we derive from communion with the sick and with the dead? Ah! slow as the young and the thoughtless are to believe it, they are rich in meaning and purifying in their influence. Who can witness a fellow-being wasting away under some loathsome disease, without feeling a deeper sentiment of pity and compassion toward his feeble, erring, and suffering race; and who can follow the cold remains of a neighbor, a friend, or even an enemy, to the silent resting-place of our poor mortality, without deep and moving thoughts, and without purer and better feelings toward both the dead and the living? We pity the man,—from our very hearts we pity him,—for his hardness of heart we pity him, who can visit the chamber of sickness, or stand over the fresh grave of the fallen, and harbor an unkind thought or a hard feeling toward a single being which wears the human form, even though he has enemies which have tried to do him injury. "Truth should be there felt and taught, in the silence of meditation, more persuasive, and more enduring, than ever flowed from human lips. The grave hath a voice of eloquence which speaks at once to the thoughtlessness of the rash, and the devotion of the good; which addresses all times, and all ages, and all sexes; which

tells of wisdom to the wise, and of comfort to the afflicted; which warns us of our follies and our dangers; which whispers to us in accents of peace, or alarms us in tones of terror; which steals with a healing balm into the stricken heart, and lifts up and supports the broken spirit; which awakens a new enthusiasm for virtue, and disciplines us for its severer trials and duties; which calls up the images of the illustrious dead, with an animating presence, for our example and glory; and which demands of us, that the powers given by God should be devoted to his service, and that the mind, created by his love, should return to him with larger capacities for virtuous enjoyment, and with more spiritual and intellectual brightness."*

3. Adversity does much also for the cultivation of *piety;* by which I mean, gratitude and resignation toward God. I confess that I once thought this impossible. I looked upon prosperity and continuous enjoyment as the means of giving mankind confidence in the goodness of their Maker, and of kindling their hearts into gratitude and love toward him. But observation and experience have led me to a different conclusion, and I say, in the language of another, "The most sceptical men, the most insensible to God's goodness, the

* Story.

most prone to murmur, may be found among those who are laden above all others with the goods of life, whose cup overflows with prosperity, and who, by an abuse of prosperity, have become selfish, exacting, and all alive to inconveniences and privations. These are the cold-hearted and the doubting. If I were to seek those whose conviction of God's goodness is faintest and most easily disturbed, I would seek them in the palace sooner than in the hovel. I would go to the luxurious table, to the pillow of ease, to those among us who abound most, to the self-exalting, the self-worshiping, not to the depressed and forsaken. The profoundest sense of God's goodness which it has been my privilege to witness, I have seen in the countenance and heard from the lips of the suffering. I have found none to lean on God with such filial trust, as those whom he has afflicted. I doubt, indeed, if true gratitude and true confidence ever spring up in the human soul, until it has suffered. A superficial, sentimental recognition of God's goodness may indeed be found among those who have lived only to enjoy. But deep, strong, earnest piety strikes root in the soil which has been broken and softened by calamity. And such, I believe, is the observation of every

man who has watched the progress of human character."*

I might speak of the beneficial influence of adversity in another respect. I might show how the dark dispensations of Providence teach mankind the value of the Gospel of Christ, and how disappointment and bereavement give them a relish for those streams of life and peace which make glad the city of Zion. I might ask you to go to the dark chamber of sickness, or the darker chamber of death, where a beloved form is dressed in its last robes, and where the bereaved hang over it and weep with groanings which cannot be uttered; and I might show you that in such scenes —scenes which we must all witness, the voice of the Gospel, which speaks of a glorious immortality beyond the grave, and which brings the assurance that all these afflictions will be overruled for good, and terminate in greater purity and more substantial happiness, is sweeter to the ear than honey to the taste; and you could not fail to conclude that though men may neglect and even ridicule the Gospel while they are in the gayety and sunshine of prosperity, their folly is rebuked, and they are made to see that it is more precious than ten thousand worlds, when the darkness of affliction

* Channing.

and death settles around them. But I must not speak on this subject. I have already drawn too liberally upon your time, if not upon your patience. And I have done what I undertook. I have given you my thoughts on the reality, origin, and end of human suffering. To reconcile all the mysteries which hang about this great subject, and vindicate all God's ways in his dark dispensations, I have not had the folly to attempt. This is not my business. God will take care of his own ways, and in due time he will vindicate the goodness thereof to every creature, whether I comprehend it or not. It is enough for me to know that the mixed elements of my lot are under the direction of a kind and good Being, and that the sufferings which I am called to endure are ordained in mercy, and have for their end the purification and elevation of my nature. And I have found this grand truth in the teachings of Revelation and in the lessons of experience. I cannot doubt it. I see, every day of my life, that man cannot bear continual prosperity; that it corrupts him, makes him proud, peevish, overbearing, selfish, and sensual, and would blot out his true glory; and I see that it is the sublime purpose of adversity to check and humble his pride, to give him serious thoughts and tender feelings, to discipline and

strengthen his social and moral powers, and thus to lead him forth to righteousness and victory. I bless God, therefore, for the storm, as well as for the sunshine—for suffering, as well as for enjoyment. I pretend not to see his goodness in every instance and form in which it is inflicted, but I should not dare, had I the power, to stretch forth my hand to lessen its amount, in the present state of human nature. Man needs its sweet but salutary influence. "Favor," even in fortune, "is deceitful," and leads ten thousands in ruinous paths; but

"This is no flattery; these are counselors
That feelingly persuade me what I am.
Sweet are the uses of adversity;
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head."

Let man, then, conclude with the poet:

"What, then, am I?
Amidst applauding worlds,
And worlds celestial, is there found on earth
A peevish, dissonant, rebellious string,
Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains?
* * * * * * * * *
All, all is right, by God ordained or done;
And who, but God, resumed the friends he gave?
And have I been complaining, then, so long?
Complaining of his favors, pain and death?
Who, without pain's advice, would e'er be good?
Who, without death, but would be good in vain?

Pain is to save from pain; all punishment
To make for peace; and death to save from death.

* * * * * * * * *

Heaven gives us friends to bless the present scene;
Removes them, to prepare us for the next.
All evils natural are moral goods;
All discipline indulgence, on the whole.

* * * * * * * * *

Great God of wonders!———
What rocks are these on which to build our trust!
Thy ways admit no blemish; none I find;
Or this alone,—that none is to be found:
Not one, to soften Censure's hardy crimes;
Not one, to palliate peevish grief's complaint,
Who, like a demon, murmuring from the dust,
Dares into judgment call his judge—Supreme!
For all I bless thee; most for the severe;
It thunders, but it thunders to preserve;
It strengthens what it strikes; its hideous groans
Join heaven's sweet hallelujahs in thy praise,
Great Source of good alone! how kind in all!
In vengeance kind, in pain and death."

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies."

MAN CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.

"So God created man in his own image."—*Gen.* i., 27.

THIS was the last and noblest work of the Creator. He had arched the heavens and moulded the earth; he had set bounds to the great deep, and caused the dry land to appear; he had clothed the mountains with verdure, and filled the vales with life and beauty; he had peopled the waters with the finny tribes, with "great whales" and the mighty leviathan; he had made the air to swarm with the humming insect and "flying fowl," and he had covered the earth with "cattle and creeping things;" but there was as yet nothing within the boundaries of the new creation which was worthy to receive the impress of his own nature. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and

female created he them; and God blessed them, and said unto them, Replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."

Here is the beginning of wisdom. Here is the basis of all moral truth. To man there are no greater questions than these:—What is my nature? and what was I made for? If he cannot answer, he is wofully blind and ignorant of everything that most vitally concerns his true interest and welfare, however learned he may be in literature and science. He knows not the law and purpose of his being, and he is as little prepared to see the wisdom of God in the constitution of his nature, and to act well his part on the stage of human life, as the mariner would be to shun the perils of the ocean, if he should push out to sea ignorant of the several parts of his vessel and of their uses, and without chart or compass with which to regulate his passage.

"*God created man in his own image.*" What does this mean? Is it true? And what light does it shed on human nature, duty, and destiny? These questions seem to cover the main ground of the subject-matter of the text, and I feel that I can-

not better employ your minds at the present time than in their discussion.

I. What are we to understand by the statement that "God created man in his own image?" An image is the representation or likeness of a thing. It has long been a custom to enstamp the image of the reigning king or ruler upon the coins that are put into circulation, and when this has been done, the features of the original have had an impression upon the circulating medium. We have a case in point in the Gospel history. Some cavilers came to Christ with the question, "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? And Jesus said unto them, Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's." The penny wore the impression of Cæsar's features, and therefore they could not mistake its parentage and ownership. So it is with man. The image of God is enstamped upon his nature. The features of the Divine Mind are drawn upon his own, and he who will read them cannot doubt the divinity of his parentage.

We shall obtain more distinct conceptions of the nature of the divine image in man by considering the nature and attributes of God. "God is a

Spirit," said the great Teacher, and all creation proclaims the same truth. The laws of nature all point us to a spiritual existence above them, "who, retired behind his own creation, works unseen." Gross, unthinking matter could no more have been the cause of creation and her wonderful operations, than eternal darkness could have been the cause of the existence of light. Hence philosophy and revelation are one in saying that the Author of nature is a spiritual being. He is Mind. He is Infinite Intelligence. Now here we may see the nature of the divine image in man. He is not all matter. "The life is more than meat." He has a spiritual, intellectual nature. A ray of the divine light is given him, and it makes him a being of thought, intelligence, knowledge. But we must not stop here. God is not mere Intelligence. There is a higher principle in his nature. He is a *moral*, as well as a mental being. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne." Perfect Rectitude, impartial Equity, unspotted and everlasting Purity, and infinite Benevolence, are the qualities of his nature, and the laws of his government; and they make it inconsistent with his own happiness and the welfare of his subjects to do wickedly, or pervert judgment. And here do we see what is the highest glory of the divine

image in man. He is not only an intellectual, but a *moral* being. The ideas of justice, of right, of rectitude, and of benevolence, are the noblest elements of his being; and in virtue of these elements, sin is inconsistent with his nature and welfare; moral purity is his natural element, and the only one in which he can be happy.

When, therefore, it is said that "God created man in his own image," the simple meaning is, that man was endowed with an intellectual and moral nature. There is nothing in it to favor the idea (which some have supposed to have been the meaning of the sacred writer) that man was made immortal or incorruptible; but the whole of the matter is simply this,—that a likeness of the divine attributes was impressed upon human nature, making man an intellectual and moral being. This view is abundantly confirmed by the Apostle Paul, who defines the image of God to be "*knowledge*," "*righteousness and true holiness*;" that is, moral purity.

II. Let us now inquire, Is this *true*? True! I need not ask this question, except for the purpose of saying a few things by way of confirmation. Little as some men think, and much as some men doubt, there can be but few who will call in question the doctrine of the text. And if there are

any such, we believe that their scepticism can be removed by their looking into the nature of man. The time has been when the Mosaic account of the creation of the world was denied, even by men of science; and it was confidently said, that the beginning of the Bible was a lie, and that, for aught that man could tell, the world has existed forever; but since then, the bosom of the earth has been bored and dug, and her successive strata and the remains of her former children have been laid open to the gaze of a doubting world; and the consequence has been, that the recent creation of the earth, with its productions and inhabitants, has been made, not a matter of mere faith, but of positive demonstration. So here: if there are any who doubt that the Bible tells the truth when it says that "God created man in his own image," they will find a cure for their scepticism in the investigation of the nature of man. Let them penetrate its crust; let them go beneath its surface, and lay open its inward strata; and let them read the prints and impressions of the divine hand, and decipher the hieroglyphics that are written upon the soul; and they will find the image of God, distinct and clear, on the tablet of human nature, and they will henceforth look upon man, not as a mere lump of animated clay, but as a spiritual

being ; not as a brute, but the child of God ; not as the insect of a day, but the heir of immortality.

> " Call now to mind what high,
> Capacious powers lie folded up in man."

Look upon his works. Mark his conquests over nature. Read the productions of his genius. Proofs of mental weakness and folly you will doubtless find, but you cannot look upon the temples he has reared, the cities he has built, the continents he has explored and subdued, much less can you examine the arts and sciences which he has developed, and the systems of law and philosophy which he has elaborated, without being led to the conclusion that there is within him an intellectual energy which claims kindred with that mighty Mind which contrived and built this vast and glorious universe. So evident is the fact that man is an intellectual being, that it has never been denied, certainly by no man of intelligence ; but there has been one way by which some men, calling themselves philosophers, have endeavored to prove that intelligence is not a *natural* attribute. It has been said that man's powers are the result of education ; that they are not innate, but the growth of circumstances. This is a part of that system of philosophy which has contended that there has been no such thing as absolute creation

in nature, but that everything has sprouted and grown up spontaneously. They have imagined that the earth, somehow or other, in some strange way, but in a fortunate moment, brought forth a vegetable, that this grew awhile, and then sprouted up into an animal, and that the animal crawled about awhile upon the earth, but, through inconvenience or pride, it soon took to itself legs, which happened to come that way at the right time, and walked, and finally, aspiring still higher, it threw away its fore legs and paws, and took a pair of arms and hands, and became a man! On this hypothesis, the elephant once had no trunk, and the birds no bills nor wings, but they gradually grew out as they made efforts to gather their food, or to fly! And accordingly, it has been argued that the mental powers which so distinguish and ennoble man are not innate, were not originally created in him, but are the result of effort, the product of circumstances, the fruit of education.

Now, if this theory could be sustained, the idea that God created man after his own image, might be all a delusion; the dream of the atheist might be a reality, and man would trace his pedigree and find his parentage in the brute, and thence downward to the vegetable, and lower still, down—down to nothing! But the theory will not abide

the test of facts. Who ever knew vegetables grow up into animals, and animals into men? Who ever saw an elephant without a trunk, or birds without bills or wings? We should really like to know! But we suspect that nothing of this kind was ever seen, and for a good reason, because nothing of the kind ever existed. This is the decision of modern science. The discoveries in geology and physiology have abundantly proved that each species of plants and animals is distinct and separate, not intermingling one with another, nor growing out of each other, being endowed at the moment of their creation with the perfect germs or attributes of all that they will be in their maturity. Hence every species of the vegetable kingdom, and every tribe of animals, is the same now, in the essential properties of their nature, as when they were first called into being. Time, circumstances, education, may have *developed* their qualities and powers, but they have not, because they could not have, *created* them. Talk of education creating the powers of the mind! There cannot be a greater absurdity. You might as well say that education would create wings on our bodies, or give us another set of ears or eyes! It is the work of education, not to *create*, but to *train, develop, cultivate*, what already exists.

Education learns the young bird how to fly; but it did not create its wings; these were the work of its Maker, and they were folded up in the very egg whose shell it has left behind it. And so it is with man. When he comes from the hand of his Maker, he has within him the germs of all that he is ever to become, either in this world or in the future; and all that education, philosophy, or revelation can do, is to bring out his primitive powers, and guide them to their legitimate objects. Newton, when he lay "mewling and puking in his nurse's arms," possessed within the folds of his inward being every attribute of that godlike intellect which afterward weighed the planets in its scales, and unraveled the laws which govern their action. It was effort, education, discipline, which called out his powers, and made him successful in his career of glory. And if you, and I, and the rest of our race, are ignorant like the beasts which perish, and our minds are unenlightened, unstored with knowledge, it is not because God has denied us the requisite capacities, but because we have neglected to employ them; and though it may not be true that we are all endowed with the same degree of mental capacity at our creation, yet it may be put down as a fact that the differences among us, in point of knowledge, are

owing more to circumstances than nature, more to education than innate capacity.

It is therefore a matter of demonstration that man is naturally an intellectual being; and so it is that he is naturally a *moral* being. And when we say that man is naturally a moral being, we mean that his nature is cast in such a mould—that his faculties are of such a constitutional character, that virtue is his natural condition, and moral purity the only element in which he can be happy. We know that different views of our nature are entertained. There are philosophers, as they call themselves, who view virtue as a mere accident of our nature, as the product of habit or education; and there are theologians who affirm that there is naturally no good thing about man, and that his nature must be worked over, be made anew, before he can perform a virtuous deed. But we believe that our position can be abundantly sustained, that man is naturally a moral being; and there are two facts which would seem to be enough to put the matter beyond the reach of cavil.

1. Man has moral faculties or affections, and they are the highest portion of his nature.

The moral is placed above the animal, and invested with authority to govern it. Conscience,

the divinity within, is the highest power of the soul. When man hearkens to its sacred and authoritative voice,—when he listens to the dictates of his moral nature, he resists the impulses of his appetites and passions, gets the victory over temptations, and fulfills the law and purpose of his being in maintaining a course of virtue and purity. This is his natural condition. But when he turns a deaf ear to the voice of his moral nature, and gives himself up to the guidance of his animal appetites and passions, he reverses the order, and violates the law of his nature, and thus becomes a sinner. You say of a fish, that it was made to live in the water; and of a bird, that it was designed for the air; because they are physically adapted to these different elements. So with man. His faculties are adapted to virtue; he has a moral nature; and when he goes into vice, he goes out of his natural element. We shall come to the same conclusion, if we consider,—

2. *The effects of vice.* Man, we very well know, has sinned, and come short of the glory of God. His nature, we confess, has been corrupted, depraved, degraded; he has reversed the order, and violated the law of God within him; and this is sometimes referred to as proof that depravity is his natural element, and that the image of God

has been blotted out from his nature. We admit the fact, but we draw from it a different conclusion. You tell me that man is a great sinner. I grant it; I know it. What then? Why, that he has a great capacity for virtue, for goodness. "Sin is the transgression of the law;" and if the law of duty, of virtue, were not written on his heart, he could not be a sinner in transgressing it; indeed, he could not transgress it, if it were not written there, because he could have no sense of virtue before sinning, and no sense of guilt when and after he had sinned.

There is another fact which has more weight than the opinions of divines, and which clearly proves that all this depravity is *un*natural. It is this: What is its *effect*? What influence does it exert on man? Does it exalt and ennoble him? Does it carry peace, joy, and contentment to the soul? Does he find it the way of prosperity and happiness? If so, depravity is natural to him; it is his true element, and he had better remain in it forever. But no. Depravity, sin, is a deadly enemy to man.

It destroys the divine harmony of his nature, eats away its beauty like a moth, and makes him uneasy, discontented, unhappy. It pollutes all the fountains of enjoyment within him, and fre-

quently forces him to use the language which Milton has put into the mouth of Satan,—

"Me miserable!
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell,
And in the lowest deep."

Now why is this? It is because depravity is an unnatural condition. It is because man has a moral nature, and because he can find no peace, no happiness, but in moral purity, the element in which he was created. When you see a fish gasping upon the shore, you say it is unhappy, because it is out of its natural element; and when we see man uneasy, unhappy in his depravity and sin, we know that it is because he is in an unnatural state,—because he has departed from the original purity of his nature.

Moses, then, was dealing in no fiction when he affirmed that "God created man in his own image." He declared a truth which can yet be read upon his inner nature. Ignorant and depraved though he be, enslaved and degraded as he is, there is still to be discerned the distinct and clear impressions of the attributes of his Maker upon him. He has *intellectual* and *moral* faculties, and these are his highest powers. They constitute the man, and should regulate his whole

conduct. They give him dominion over "every living thing that moveth upon the earth," and over "the subtle beast" of his own animal nature; and when he maintains this dominion, and regulates his whole conduct by enlightened reason and a good conscience, he stands forth in his true glory; "the benignity, serenity, and splendor of a highly-elevated nature beam from his countenance, and radiate from his eye. He is then lovely, noble, and gigantically great." And when he allows his appetites and passions to lead him astray, and this divine order is broken, the degradation and misery, which are the certain consequences of sin, proclaim, in tones of sad but truthful eloquence, that the image of God yet shines within him, revealing to him his guilt, and giving him a withering sense of his fallen condition, and causing him to say as the Prodigal did while afar off in the barren land of transgression, "*I perish; I will arise and go to my Father.*" And these facts show, not only that man was created in the Divine image at the beginning of our race, but that he still wears this image; for if this were not the case, he could be neither a moral nor an accountable being. And this is confirmed by the Apostle James, who says, "*Men* ARE *made after the similitude of God.*"

III. We now come to make a practical improvement of the truth which we have illustrated and defended. Man wears the image of God. What conclusions shall we draw from this great fact?

1. We may here learn the dignity and worth of Human Nature. It is not created with powers which place it above the possibility of error and sin; to use the expressive language of an Apostle, it is created "*subject* to vanity;" but it has capacities and desires for truth, purity, and perfection; and when, through its present weakness, it falls short of their attainment, the dissatisfaction, pain, and woe which it experiences bear eloquent testimony to the fact, that it has fallen from its true sphere, from its natural dignity and glory. How clearly do we here see the grossness and the folly of the two views of our nature, which have been too common in all ages,—the one contending that man is a mere animal, with a little more intellect, it may be, but endowed with no high moral qualities, and intended no more for the attainment of knowledge and virtue than he was to live in ignorance and vice; the other affirming that our nature is a hateful mass of moral corruption, devoid of every natural capacity for virtue and goodness, and incapable of a pure thought or a virtuous deed, until it is worked over and made anew!

We can say in the language of Channing:— "I do and I must reverence human nature. Neither the sneers of a worldly scepticism, nor the groans of a gloomy theology, disturb my faith in its godlike powers and tendencies. I know how it is despised, how it has been oppressed, how civil and religious establishments have for ages conspired to crush it. I know its history. I shut my eyes on none of its weaknesses and crimes. I know the proofs by which despotism demonstrates that man is a wild beast, in want of a master, and only safe in chains. But injured, scorned, and trampled on as our nature is, I still turn to it with intense sympathy and strong hope. The signatures of its origin and its end are too deeply impressed upon it to be ever wholly effaced. I bless it for its kind affections, for its strong and tender love. I honor it for its struggles against oppression, for its growth and progress under the weight of so many chains and prejudices, for its achievements in science and art, and still more for its examples of heroic and saintly virtue; and I thank God that my own lot is bound up with that of the human race."

In this view of our nature, we find an answer to the inquiry which arose in the mind of the Psalmist, when he cast his eye abroad over the

universe, and beheld the infinitude of the Creator's works: "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him?" How natural was the inquiry! Who has not felt, when, in some bright and beautiful evening, he has gazed away into the blue heavens, and looked upon the unnumbered worlds that people the realms of space,—who has not then felt that man is too insignificant a creature in the universe to receive the care and protection of his Maker? Who has not then felt that the Being who presides over such vast domains cannot stoop so low as to be mindful of him, and to visit him with a Saviour and with revelations of his will and requirements? So felt the Psalmist when he considered the heavens, the moon, and the stars which God had ordained. But he was relieved from the troublesome thought and the sinking feeling, when he called home his discursive spirit, and turned his mind inward upon the nature of man. He saw there the image of his Maker; he perceived that he had an intellectual and moral constitution which made him superior to all the glories and wonders of the material universe. He then seized his harp anew, and sung an answer to the question: "Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" "For thou hast made him a little lower than the

angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the depth of the sea. O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" And if we have correct views of our nature, we shall see beauty in all the works of God, and we shall feel, without pride, that we are of more value in his sight than many worlds, that the very "hairs of our head are numbered" before him, and that there is not a want in our nature which has not provided means to satisfy. We shall read the records of Revelation, and in the mission of prophets and the visit of the Son of God, in their astonishing annunciations and their wonderful miracles, when the heavens spoke and the grave gave up its dead, we shall see nothing incredible—nothing inconsistent with the works and ways of God, but we shall regard these things as speaking and faithful witnesses of his mindfulness of his children, and as the means of giving them a knowledge of himself, of his everlasting love and his holy laws, and of carrying them forward to the perfection and glory of their being.

2. What clear and useful light does our subject shed upon human duty! It not only shows that a course of sin is inconsistent with the nature and welfare of man, but that he should seek his glory and happiness, not in mere earthliness and worldliness, but in the culture of his intellectual and moral powers. He may and he should take an interest in the things of this world, and it is his duty to make a portion of them his own; but if his attention and affections are all confined to these transient, perishing objects—if he does not employ his intellect and his moral nature in the study of truth, in the acquirement of knowledge, and in the love and practice of virtue, he perverts the great purpose of his being, and he is "poor indeed." He may and he should labor for the meat which perisheth, for the means of preserving and enjoying an animal existence, but he should labor harder for that which endureth unto everlasting life,—for the elevation and gratification of his intellectual and moral nature,—for the acquisition of a correct knowledge of God and his government, and for increase and triumph in moral excellence.

Look, my friends, within you. Read the writing which the divine hand has put upon the soul. "Whose image and superscription is this?" Say you not, "It is God's?" Wherefore, let me say,

"render unto him the things which are his." Give him your affections, your gratitude, your obedience. Let every faculty of your nature be kept in agreement with his laws. Love him with all your hearts, and with all your strength, and with all your souls.

> "Let deep this truth impress our mind,—
> Through all his works abroad,
> The heart benevolent and kind,
> The most resembles God."

And, 3. What light does this subject shed on the question in regard to human destiny? Does it not furnish proof that the Christian hope of immortality has a foundation in human nature? Does it not give at least strong prosumptive evidence that man was made for a higher and better life than the present? How others view the matter I cannot say; but, for one, I cannot see how an affirmative answer can be avoided; I cannot see why man was endowed with the image of his Maker; why his intellectual and moral powers were conferred upon him, giving him "thoughts which wander through eternity," and aspirations after infinite and eternal good, if his career was to end at the grave, and the light within him quenched in eternal night. Why, if this is to be his doom,

were not his powers adapted to his end? Why not made a brute, if he is to perish with the brute? Why do his thoughts claim an infinite field for their exercise, and an imperishable good for their end, if he was not made for immortality? I must adopt the conclusion of an Apostle: "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in *hope*, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal immortality."

> "It must be so,"—Paul, "thou reasonest well!—
> Else, whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
> This longing after immortality?
> Or, whence this secret dread and inward horror,
> Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
> Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
> 'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
> 'Tis Heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
> And intimates eternity to man."

I read this glorious truth in the teachings of Christianity and in the nature, capacities, and aspirations of the human mind. I think I cannot be mistaken in supposing that the image of God in man makes him of more worth than the whole outward universe, and that it will exist and reflect

the glories of its Maker, after the present form of our creation shall have passed away.

> "The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
> Grow dim with age, and Nature sink in years;
> But this shall flourish in immortal youth,
> Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
> The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds."

And we may not only learn from this subject, that man shall have immortality, but that it will be an immortality which will be a blessing to all our race.

It does not seem consistent or reasonable, that God would banish his own image, his own child, from him forever. What if it is now corrupt? Has he not power to cleanse it? What if he is now a transgressor? Will he not still require him to obey him; and will he not continue to love him, and strive to bring him into the enjoyment of his favor? Because he is so unfortunate as to have gone astray, will God forever disown him, and give him over to the service and dominion of an infinite being, called the Devil? Be not hasty in your conclusion. Look on the heart of Humanity. Read the writing on human nature. "Whose image and superscription is this?" Ah! it is God's. "Render unto God, therefore, the things that are God's." Consent that he will eternally

claim the obedience of his offspring, and that the ends of his government will not be answered, till all shall pay the tribute of their love into the treasury of heaven, and are made the heirs and recipients of an incorruptible and fadeless inheritance. The image which they wear upon their nature may be soiled and marred, while in its present incipient state, but it shall be made bright and glorious in its ascent to the world for which it is destined. And so it is written: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." "The dust shall return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

SIN A MORAL INSANITY.

"And he came to himself."—*Luke* xv., 17.

SIN is always held up in the Bible as the greatest evil under the sun, and the figures which the sacred writers employ to describe its nature and influence are strikingly significant of blight and ruin to the happiness of man. It is generally compared to some loathsome and mortal disease; frequently it is represented under the figure of that worst of all diseases—the leprosy, which, although unseen in its first stages, and slow in its progress, leads to the most ruinous and dreadful consequences. In the words which I have just read, or in the great lesson of our Saviour from which they are taken, it is set forth as a moral *insanity*, and in this light I propose to consider it in the present discourse. I will consider,

I. Its Nature.
II. Its Causes.
III. Its Effects. And
IV. Its Treatment and Cure.

I. The nature of sin—what is it? In the par-

able of the Prodigal Son, it is represented as a state of moral insanity. The young man, though blessed with all the means of enjoyment which a good home and a kind father could afford, becomes uneasy, discontented, and finally takes his portion of the estate, and makes his way into a far country. He there spends his property in the haunts of degradation and vice, and reduces himself to a state of the most abject want and misery. And while suffering the sad effects of his folly, "he came to himself," and he then said, "I will arise and go to my father." You see, therefore, that he is represented as being in a state of insanity when he went astray, and until he learned that there was no permanent happiness but in the house which he had deserted. Now what is the philosophy of this matter? Wherein lies the propriety of calling sin a species of insanity?

Insanity, you must all know, is a disease which has severely tried the wisdom of the wisest men. Through all ages it has been regarded as the worst of maladies and the greatest of mysteries. While all have seen and lamented its evils, few have ventured to unravel its nature. Very generally, it has been looked upon as an effect for which no cause could be found, or as a judgment from God for something which no mortal could understand.

But we believe that the progress of mental science has thrown some light upon it, though, it must be confessed, not yet enough to scatter all the darkness that lies around it. Since the days of Gall, Rush, and Spurzheim, the human mind has been more and more regarded as being made up of a variety of animal, intellectual, and moral faculties, and so much has been done in the way of discovering their functions, that light now shines where there was formerly nothing but darkness. When these faculties are all in a healthy state, and in harmonious action, the mind is perfectly sane; every power in the wonderful machine fulfills its mission, and the man stands forth in all the dignity and glory of his nature. But when one or more of the faculties, in consequence of some undue excitement, becomes unhealthy, irregular in its action, then the mind falls into a state of insanity, and the degree of insanity will be in proportion to the number of the faculties which are thus affected, and the extent or degree in which they are thus affected. If only one of the faculties are disturbed in its functions, the mind will be sound on all subjects but one, and the degree of that insanity will depend upon the amount of injury done to it.

Insanity, then, according to this view of the matter, is nothing more nor less than *derangement*

—derangement of one or more faculties of the mind; and, consequently, there are as many species of insanity as there are kinds of faculties. And how many kinds of faculties are there in man? Evidently three—the animal, intellectual, and moral. The animal is the source of his appetites and propensities, making him a creature of this world; and when they act within the bounds which nature has set to their gratification, they fulfill their offices, and minister to his welfare; but when they overleap these bounds, and run into wild, unlawful excesses, the order among them is broken, and they fall into derangement. This is *animal* insanity. The intellectual faculties are the powers which have been given him for the attainment of knowledge, and by which to choose his way in the walks of life; they are the means through which he observes facts, and rises to the comprehension of laws and principles; and when they are all in healthy and harmonious action, his intellect is clear and sound, his memory and judgment are good; and he will shed the sun-light of wisdom on all subjects to which he gives his attention; but when these faculties become unduly excited, or they are directed into wrong channels, they fall into derangement, reason leaves her royal throne, and "the dome of thought, the palace of the

soul," crumbles to a heap of noble ruins. This is *intellectual* insanity. But there is a higher nature and a worse insanity than this. Man has *moral* faculties, and they are his highest, noblest powers. In these originate all his ideas of right, of justice, of benevolence, of veneration, of duty, and they make it the end and aim of his being to "depart from evil and do good, to seek peace and pursue it," to restrain his appetites and passions, and keep them within the bounds of moral virtue, and to square all his conduct by the dictates of a pure conscience. And when he does this, he maintains the true glory of a moral being, he wears a crown upon his head which gives him more dignity than the richest badge of royalty ever worn by king. He then treads the allurements and temptations of the world under his feet, lives in an atmosphere of moral purity, considers virtue the only true good, and vice the greatest curse of his nature, and reaps a rich reward in constant harmony and peace of soul. But when this moral harmony is broken, when appetite and passion get the ascendency over the moral nature, over conscience, and the solemn voice, which speaks of virtue as the supreme good, is drowned by the clamor and noise of the propensities, his noblest powers fall into disorder and derangement, and he

sinks into degradation and ruin. This is *moral* insanity; and it is to be "deplored as human nature's darkest, foulest blot," as the greatest curse which man brings upon himself. The loss of reason we know is great, but what is it in comparison with loss of conscience, loss of virtue, loss of moral order? Nothing, and almost less than nothing. When you visit the Insane Retreat, and behold the wild ravings, and listen to the strange mutterings of the unfortunate inmates, you witness a most horrid spectacle, it is true; you see intellect in ruins; but if you looked through pure eyes, you might see in your streets and the dwellings around you, worse ruins than these—the ruins, not of reason merely, but of the moral nature; you might see men in fetters and chains more galling than those which are made of iron—the chains and fetters of deranged appetites and passions, and you might realize that they were in more gloomy retreats than those in which the maniacs are confined—the retreats of shame and guilt,—ah! and they are retreats which their own hands, their own crimes, have built. Those who are under the influenee of intellectual mania are generally blind to their miseries; they are frequently joyful and happy in their lunacy; but those who are under the influence of moral ma-

nia are not often so highly favored; if they are blind to the deceitfulness of sin, they are not to its *miseries;* memory and conscience are at work within, and they haunt and torment him, not with the mere *spectres*, but the *realities*, of their guilt.

Such is the nature of sin. It is moral insanity—moral derangement. Man is made upright, in the image of God. He has a moral nature, and it should hold the ascendency over his animal impulses and earthly interests, and regulate all his conduct by the great principles of justice and benevolence toward man, and of reverence toward God. While he does this, he has moral soundness of mind; every faculty is in a healthy and harmonious action; virtue is loved and sought as the true good, vice looked upon with loathing and horror, and he is in his right mind on all subjects relating to duty and the true welfare of his being. But when this divine order is broken, and the animal nature gets the ascendency over the moral, his moral powers are in a state of derangement; he is insane in regard to his duty and the means of happiness; he prefers the path of vice to that of virtue; he leaves the lovely mansion of righteousness, and treads the barren wastes of sin in pursuit of enjoyment; and he spends his powers in animal pleasures and sensual degradation. Such

is sin. It is moral derangement. Will you mark this? Sin is *derangement* in the moral nature. It is not, then, inherent and natural, as our divines have told us; it is not the legitimate fruit of our nature; it is the *abuse*, corruption, derangement of our nature. "To sin is to resist our sense of right, to oppose known obligations, to cherish feelings, or commit deeds, which we know to be wrong. It is to withhold from God the reverence, gratitude, and obedience which our own consciences pronounce to be due to that great and good Being. It is to transgress those laws of equity, justice, candor, humanity, benevolence, which we all feel to belong and to answer to our various social relations. It is to yield ourselves to those appetites which we know to be the inferior principles of our nature, to give the body a mastery over the mind, to sacrifice the intellect and heart to the senses, to surrender ourselves to ease and indulgence, or to prefer outward accumulation and power to strength and peace of conscience, to progress toward perfection. Such is sin. It is voluntary wrong-doing," with the idea that it will lead to happiness.

How clearly is all this set forth in the case of the Prodigal Son! That young man had a joyful home and a kind father, and every means of en-

joyment were at his command. It would seem that he had nothing to do, in order to be happy, but to be contented, to stay at home, and to obey the parental requirements, which were not grievous, which were indeed made for his own good. But a strange hallucination came over him. He became discontented, and resolved to leave his home. He thought himself wiser than his father. He preferred the gratification of his appetites and passions to moral obedience, and he went forth to waste his substance with harlots and riotous living.

II. From the *nature*, let us turn to the *causes* of the dreadful malady we are considering. Sin is a moral derangement, which disturbs the action of the noblest faculties, and leads its unfortunate victim to believe that the way of transgression is the path of happiness. What is the cause or causes of this sad derangement? Much has been said in the theological world about the origin of sin, and many are the theories which have been framed to account for it. The most common one supposes that all sin had its origin in heaven—that one of the angels of God in that high and holy place became overcharged with pride, and was cast out as a sinner, and that he has since wandered up and down in the universe, seeking whom he might lead to ruin; and it is contended that

mankind sin, in consequence of being tempted by this devil. But we do not see the necessity of looking so high to find the origin of sin. If sin had its source in heaven, we cannot see why our earth should receive so much condemnation. And if man sins because of the influence of a personal devil, why fasten the guilt upon him? If he sins by being tempted of a devil, the devil would be a convenient scape-goat on which to bear away his guilt. There is a more rational way. I believe that the time has been when *intellectual* insanity was generally thought to be the work of some foreign evil being; they looked upon the raving maniac, and being ignorant of the laws and operations of the mind, they could not account for it, except on the supposition that some malignant, personal agent had done it; and I presume that there are thousands in the world who entertain the same opinion: But men of intelligence and science find no difficulty now in accounting for this awful disease, without referring it to the influence of such an agent: they see that it is no more nor less than the *derangement* of one or more of the intellectual faculties, and they understand that it is caused by some disappointment or unnatural excitement. So with moral insanity. Many honest people have long supposed that it is the work of a personal

evil being, called the devil, and many still hold the same opinion; but it would seem that a little knowledge would be sufficient to convince any man that sin is nothing more than a derangement in the moral faculties, and that it is caused by deception, or by corrupting influences acting on the mind and heart.

How is this matter set forth in the Bible? Listen, and ye shall understand: "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own *lust*, and *enticed*." Here animal appetite and deception are held up as the causes of sin, not a personal devil. And so the matter is represented throughout the Scriptures. A serpent, we know, is mentioned as the agent of transgression in the rosy bowers of Eden,—and some have said that this serpent was a personal devil; but what more appropriate figure could have been used to represent the animal part of man's nature? It is most truly styled "the most subtle beast of the field," and when left to itself, it is groveling in its pursuits; it crawls upon the earth, and it eats dust all the days of its life. It is true, also, that Jesus Christ is said to have been tempted of the devil, and we admit that he was, when the term devil is used in its Scriptural import, as signifying an adversary, wrong spirit, or wayward propensity; and

in this sense the Apostle plainly understood the temptation of Christ, when he said of him, "He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." He had all the appetites and propensities common to our nature, and they tempted him to tread the ways of sin, but he had too much knowledge to be deceived, and he escaped.

What, then, are the causes of sin? The answer is a plain one. They are unlawful appetite and mental deception. "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed; and when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." Man does not sin because he has an inherent love of it in his nature. No, surely not. The love of virtue is strong within him; he has a deep thirst for purity and perfection; but while he would do good, evil is present with him. While he has moral faculties which have an upward, elevating tendency, he has animal appetites which have a downward, degrading tendency; they clamor for present and sensual gratifications; and they would persuade him that these are more conducive to his happiness than devotion to moral principles; and when they succeed in this, he is under the influence of moral insanity; he loses a just sense of the evil of sin; dead to virtue, he looks upon it as the way to happiness, and he is

ready to commit all iniquity with greediness. So it was with mother Eve. "The woman, *being deceived*, was in the transgression." And so with the Prodigal Son. When he made up his mind to quit home, and said, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me," and when he "gathered all together," and bade farewell to the household, "and took his journey into a far country," ah! poor deceived boy, he little knew what he was about: he thought he was wiser than his father, and he supposed that he was entering on a glorious and happy career. He shed no bitter tears to leave behind him his father and the family; he went forth with a proud step and a joyous heart, and when the parental mansion faded from his view in the dim distance, he hardly cast "one lingering look behind; he heaved not a sigh, and shed not a tear, but pressed on with a bold and hurried step, in the conviction that he should find a better home and a greater good than he had left behind him.

And here you may mark the *symptoms*, as well as the *causes*, of the malady under consideration. Does a man lack confidence in virtue to make him happy? Does he talk of the pleasures of sin, and of the hardships and perils of righteousness? Does he think more of dollars and cents than he

does of the demands of duty and truth? And does he say that he would drink iniquity like water, and deal largely in transgression, if he did not fear the flames of a future and foreign hell? These are the certain symptoms of his moral insanity; they are sure proofs that his moral sense is deranged, and that he contemplates leaving the mansion of virtue, and going into a far country.

III. What are the real consequences of moral insanity? What are the effects of sin?

There seem to be some who consider sin as a very little thing, and who imagine that there are no direct and natural consequences flowing from it, which make it an object of so much concern. But is not insanity a great evil? When a friend of yours is seized with derangement of intellect, and you witness the strange workings of his lunacy, do you not feel that you could have borne it with greater patience, if it had been any bodily disease—if the *mind* had been spared? And if you were in your right mind, if you had a true sense of the evil which sin does to human nature and human society, you would feel still worse to know that that friend, though sound in intellect, was morally insane,—that though his reason was clear and strong, his moral affections were depraved and corrupted.

Look into the Garden of Eden. The first transgressors were so deceived as to suppose that the forbidden fruit would promote their spiritual health, but no sooner did they eat it than they found it poison and wormwood to all the fountains of their enjoyment. What shame, regret, and remorse did they experience! There is both nature and Scripture in Milton's description of their moral condition.

——— "Not at rest, or ease of mind,
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds rose within;
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once,
And full of peace, were toss'd and turbulent;
For understanding rul'd not, and the will
Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
To sensual appetite, who from beneath,
Usurping over sov'reign reason, claim'd
Superior sway."

And how vividly are the same sad effects of sin pictured in the parable of the Prodigal! Although he commenced his journey with the idea that it would be a land of plenty, of sunshine and roses, when he got fairly into it, he learned his mistake. The patrimony of his father was soon spent; a mighty famine came over the land, "and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself

to a citizen of that country," as the only means of supporting life; "and he sent him into his field to feed swine. And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him." O, how degrading is the service of sin! It is compared to the lowest business which the world knows—the feeding of swine. And how full of want and suffering! "He would have fain eat the husks which the swine did eat, and no man gave unto him." Naked, hungry, friendless, and forlorn, what could he do? Ah! there was one thing that he could now do, and he did it. He began to think of his folly. He called to mind the joyful home he had forsaken, and contrasted its splendid apartments and rich viands with the degradation, and want, and filth which now surrounded him. And he understood the matter. He could no longer be deceived. He came to himself. He saw that obedience was the only way in which to be happy, and he felt that the way of the transgressor is hard. And in what plaintive eloquence did he pour forth his soul upon the field of his degrading toil! "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I

have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father."

Such are the effects of sin. This disease of the soul deranges its divine powers, binds its victims in the most woful slavery—the slavery of the disordered passions,—and although it teaches them their folly, so much as to induce them to renounce sin, it fastens upon them the conviction that their sinfulness destroys their sonship, and that they can receive no favors in future from the hand of God, except such as they earn by their own exertions. This leads us to consider,

IV. The treatment and cure of the disease we have been considering.

Moral insanity, we very well know, is a most dreadful disease, and the wisdom of philosophers, and even of doctors of divinity, has been baffled in their attempts to remove it from the vitals of suffering humanity. But there is an arm higher than that of man's. He who made man, and who knew that moral mechanism would become deranged by exposure to temptation, has provided a remedy for this worst of all maladies, in the Gospel of his Son, and whoever will acquaint himself with the remedy, and use it according to

the Divine prescriptions, may be healed, and restored to moral health and life. Jesus Christ is styled the Physician, and he still has power to speak to the moral lunatic, cast out the evil demon, and clothe him in his right mind.

But there has been much ignorance and scepticism in regard to this matter. Sin, it is said, is an infinite crime; it is rebellion against God; and how can he look down upon its subjects with the smiles of his favor, treat them in the spirit of kindness, and give them means of relief? God hates sinners, and unless they do something to gain his favor, he will shut them up in the mad-house of hell, and compel them to be moral maniacs, and howl out their miseries through unwasting ages! This has been the common doctrine. We think it has arisen from ignorance of the disease and of the remedy. The disease is a moral insanity, and the remedy is the love of God. The insane man is more an object of compassion than of indignation, and mild and merciful treatment will have a better influence on him than harshness and severity. The moral lunatic is deceived; he thinks that sin is better than righteousness, and he looks upon his best friend as his worst enemy, and if he is not dealt kindly with and in the spirit of love, he will be driven into worse and worse stages of de-

rangement. The time was when intellectual insanity was thought to be incurable. The most that was done to its unfortunate victims was, to confine them in mad-houses, fasten them in fetters and stocks, and keep them from doing injury. And this is about the extent of God's wisdom and power in the treatment of the morally insane, according to a popular doctrine! Because of their aberrations, he will confine them in an eternal mad-house, pronounce their cure impossible, and make it their everlasting business to bite their fetters and gnaw their chains. Man, however, has finally gone beyond this. It has been found out that intellectual insanity is not altogether a hopeless disease; for though the skill of man has not yet succeeded in efforts to cure it in all cases, it has done much to remove the awfulness of the malady, and restore its subjects. And how has this progress been made? By the progress of knowledge and the influence of love. Thanks to the benevolence and energy of Pinal and his successors, who went into the mad-houses, where the insane were confined in darkness and in chains, talked with them in the tones of tenderness and love, and in many cases restored them to soundness of mind, and led them forth into the light of day and the sunshine of reason. From this spirit has sprung our Insane

Retreats, where these unfortunate beings can have a comfortable home, and where many of them, at least, can be restored by the kind and affectionate treatment which is now applied for their relief. And will not mankind soon believe that the skill and treatment of the Divine Physician are fully equal to this,—that he has power, and that he will use it to tame the wild workings of the human passions, and to restore the morally insane to their right mind? We cannot question it. "His arm is not shortened, that it cannot save."

Look once more into the history of the Prodigal. You will see that there were two means by which he was weaned from sin, and restored to obedience. One was punishment, or the want and the sorrow which were the effects of his folly; the other was the exhibition of his father's compassion and love to him. The first convinced him that sin was the way of misery, and induced him to retrace his steps; the second convinced him that his transgression had not extinguished the love of his father, and restored him to confidence and obedience. Mark the poor creature. Convinced of the evil of sin, he sets out on a return to his home. He thinks of the bounty and happiness which he had left there, but he awfully fears that his disobedience has had a sad influence on his father, and

that he will not meet him and own him as a son. He drags himself toward the parental mansion, expecting that his father will meet him with frowns, and the most which he dare promise himself is, that he will be received as a servant, and be put to work for his daily wages. But as he comes in sight of the house with a feeble step and a trembling heart, does his father meet him with a terrible rod and a withering frown? No, no. If he had, the sun would have turned from him at once. "But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." Soon, however, the joys of the occasion were marred by a paroxysm of madness in the elder brother, who, under the mistaken notion that virtue is hard work and poor pay, complained that this wandering brother was received into equal favor with himself, who had

stayed at home all the time, and labored hard in the field. But the father argued the case with him, saying, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

Thus it is that God treats his disobedient children. He attaches such consequences to sin, that they soon learn that there is no happiness but in the way of obedience; and when they return to Him, burdened, oppressed with their guilty fears, he meets them in the smiles of his ever-reconciled, benignant countenance, woos them to his mansions by the influence of his love, clothes them in their right mind; and if any complain at the mercy of his dealings, he pleads with them, vindicates his ways, and persuades them to be reconciled to the equality of his government.

Hearer, bind this lesson to thy heart. God hath given thee a moral nature, and it is "vanity and vexation of spirit,"—it is moral insanity, to expect to find happiness in anything but virtue. "He that is wise, shall be wise for himself."

THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST.

"We have not a High-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."—*Hebrews* iv., 15.

THAT man has not traveled far on the journey of human life, or he has been a very careless observer, who has not discovered that the road which mortals tread is beset with difficulties, dangers, trials. As a general thing, there is doubtless more of good than evil, more of pleasure than pain, in it; and the light and joyous heart of youth is extremely apt to look upon it as a continuous scene of delight and joy; but it is the solemn testimony of experience, that "each pleasure hath its poison, too, and every sweet its snare." Inquire of those who best know—the aged, whose locks have been bleached by the dews of threescore years and ten, and they will tell you that the journey of life, from the cradle even to the grave, is literally filled with dangers and obstacles, and that the traveler needs all the wisdom he can get, and all the helps at his command, in order to shun the perils to which he is exposed, and secure to himself safety

and happiness. At every step of his progress, he is met with the allurements of vice, and if he yields to their pleasant and enticing voices, he is led into dark wilds and dreary deserts; and at intervals, not distant from each other, he is visited with the storms of adversity; his fellow-pilgrims fall and die around him, leaving him almost alone to bear the burdens of life; and if he gives himself up to the influence of despair, and his mind is not blessed with light and hope, he is, of all creatures, most miserable.

And while there are difficulties and dangers all along in the journey of human life; while it is filled with the temptations of vice, and it is swept by the storms of adversity, how weak, how feeble is our nature! Strong as we may sometimes feel, able as we may think we are, we are poor, frail, feeble creatures. We are children. We can hardly go. We stumble almost at every step. Yet we talk of our strength. We say we are intellectual and moral beings; we affirm that we have the powers of reason, and that conscience and our moral resolutions are sufficient to guide us. In this we tell some truth, doubtless, but not the whole of it. Reason is surely given us, and conscience is a noble power within us; but this reason is not always very well enlightened, and

this conscience is not the only power that is lodged in our nature. We are formed with "passions wild and strong," with animal appetites and carnal propensities, and they are so clamorous for immediate gratification, that they often blind the reason and stupefy the conscience, and urge us into ruinous paths. Thanks to God for our nature, we were made for virtue; we would do good; all our higher powers love moral excellence, and we seek it as our "being's end and aim." But ah! we are weak. We can think right; we can resolve nobly; but while we would do good, evil is with us. How *to perform*, we find harder than *to will*. The infirmities of our nature are too much for us. Though the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak; and we are easily overcome by the dangers and difficulties that lie on our road, and sunk under the burdens which Providence has laid upon our shoulders.

What, then, is the highest want of our nature? What is it that we need more than everything else, in order that we may be able to meet the evils to which we are exposed, and gain the victory over them? You must all see. It is SYMPATHY. "It is not good for man to be alone." He is too weak to be successful in his struggle with the world, without help. He needs the sympathy and en-

couragement of a kindred being—a being who knows his weaknesses and wants—one who can be touched with the feeling of his infirmities, and breathe encouragement and strength into his thoughts and resolutions; yea, he needs a companion on the journey of life, who will not only have a nature like his own, and sympathize with him in all his trials and conflicts, but one who understands all the windings and obstacles in the road on which he has entered, who has borne the burden and heat of the day, and who has gotten the victory over all the evils to which poor, weak humanity is subject. And when he finds himself in the company of such a being, he can look upon the journey before him, dark and rugged though it be, and smile; he knows that the eye of One is upon him who cares for him, and into whose ear his wants will not be whispered in vain; the weakness of his nature will be fortified, and he will be prepared for triumph over the evils of life.

Now such a companion is given to the faith of man in the Gospel of our salvation. It is the man Christ Jesus. It was the highest purpose of His mission to give man what he most needed—a perfect example, to show man, in a way which he could understand, what he was made for, and how he should act, and by what means he can over-

come the world. He came forth from the mysterious depths of infinity, to reveal the great purpose and end of Humanity; and to do this, it was necessary that He should be clothed with the attributes of humanity, and to be a partaker of all the infirmities, as well as all the sublimities, of our nature. And it was so. While He was the Son of God, He was the Son of man. While He had His commission from Heaven, He had a nature of the earth. He was perfect human nature, inspired of God—inspired to tell man what his nature is, and what his conduct should be. And as He wore human nature, and felt all its infirmities, man can turn to Him, and find sympathy and encouragement in all his trials and sufferings.

But I will not keep you longer from the language of an Apostle:—"*We have not a High-Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*" You cannot fail to notice that the Apostle places the value of the example of Christ in the idea, that His nature was human, and that He hence felt all the infirmities and temptations common to man. His meaning is doubtless brought out more distinctly in the translation of Macknight:—"We have not a High-Priest who cannot *sympathize with our weakness,*

but ONE WHO *was tempted in all points according to the likeness* OF HIS NATURE TO OURS, without sin."—Mark. "He was tempted in all points ACCORDING *to the likeness of* HIS NATURE TO OURS." This makes it very strong that He had a purely human nature, but it is not stronger than it is made by the Apostle in another place:—"He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore, it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted."

The Church has taught quite another doctrine. There is an old creed which still says, "Christ is very and eternal God." It is very widely affirmed that the Son of God is the Father, that Jesus Christ is the infinite Jehovah! We will not now quote the divine testimony against this notion; we will not here call in question the truth of this doctrine; but we will say that this view of Christ deprives his example of its beauty and fitness as a guide for man. The example of a God would no doubt be a good one; it might give a presentation of infinite perfection; but it would be above

us; it would not be adapted to the weakness of our nature, and we could derive no essential aid from it. We should say, "God is in heaven, we are on earth: he never knew the weakness of our nature, and he cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; it cannot be that He ever felt the temptations which take hold of our feeble nature, and his example, bright and glorious though it be, does not meet our wants. We want the example of one who bore our common nature,—who felt the workings of our sinful impulses and passions, but who restrained them, who experienced all the sorrows which we are born to, but who overcame them; and such an example we must have, or the greatest call of our nature can have no answer." Can we have it? Not in Christ, according to Trinitarianism, for it says that he was really the eternal God. But, to help the matter, it is said that he had two natures, one divine, one human. The old creed used to read, —and I think it still reads, "Jesus Christ was perfect God and perfect man." We will not stop here to prove that this is not true, (though it is a little strange that we find nothing in the New Testament about his having two natures, on the supposition that it is true,) but you must all see that this view of Christ takes away the value

and efficiency of his example. If he had two distinct natures, one making him a "perfect God," and the other a "perfect man," a part of his character would answer my wants, it is true,—the human, but the other part—the divine—the God would be above the reach of my infirmities, and it would have the influence to destroy the power of the other portion of his character over me. I should say within myself, "If he had two natures, while I have but one, how can I be required to imitate him? True, he showed that he felt my infirmities in his human nature, and he has given me a perfect example, but how do I know but what his human nature was governed by the divine; and if it was, his case was not like mine; he was a God, while I am a man, and his example is not suited to my wants and condition. I want one for an example who had just such a nature as my own, who was just such a being as myself in thought and feeling,—in everything, except in extent of knowledge; and when I see such a being resisting the power of sin, and treading the sorrows of the world under his feet, I can understand him, and I can draw from his example a moral power which will make me strong in my conflict with the evils that beset my pathway."

And such a being I find in the New Testament.

He was "the *man* Christ Jesus,"—not the *God* Christ Jesus! He was "a *man* APPROVED OF GOD *by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which* GOD DID BY HIM,"—not a God approved of men for the miracles and wonders which he did by himself! True, he had divine endowments, but his nature was human. He had miraculous power, and miraculous knowledge; but they were not original with him; he received them from the Father; and his own powers and feelings were like our own, made after the pattern of humanity, as fashioned in the first man. And as such, he stands forth in all his history. He was like unto his brethren — the human race. He grew up among them like a man; he walked with them like a man, yea, he felt temptation, fatigue, anxiety, sorrow, and adversity, like a man. He had within him the nature of a man; he had appetites and propensities, as well as reason and conscience; and, in consequence, he was tempted in all points like as we are; pleasure presented to him its allurements, wealth its coffers, and power its glory; yet, through obedience to his moral nature, through devotion to God, truth and duty, through watchfulness and control over his appetites and passions, he came off "without sin;" he got the victory over the evils incident to humanity, and

thus showed man how he can meet the dangers and trials in his path, and overcome the world.

In this view of the character of Christ lies the power of his example. "If I regard Jesus as an august stranger, belonging to an entirely different class of existence from myself, having no common thoughts or feelings with me, and looking down upon me with only such a sympathy as I have with an inferior animal, I should regard him with a vague awe; but the immeasurable space between us would place him beyond friendship and affection. But when I feel that I have the same nature with him, and that he came to communicate to me, by his teaching, example, and intercession, his own mind, to bring me into communion with what was sublimest, purest, happiest in himself, then I can love him as I love no other being, excepting only Him who is the Father alike of Christ and of the Christian. With these views, I feel that, though ascended to Heaven, he has not gone beyond the reach of our hearts; that he has now the same interest in mankind as when he entered their dwellings, sat at their tables, washed their feet; and that there is no being so approachable, none with whom such unreserved intercourse is to be enjoyed in the future world."

But what are the evils and difficulties to which

we are exposed, and how can we derive strength from Christ sufficient to overcome them?

1. We are exposed to *sin*. We would do good, but evil is present with us. We delight in the law of God after the inward man, but we find another law in our members, warring against the law of our higher nature, and bringing us into captivity to the law of sin. We have a deep and strong love of virtue within us; we know and feel that it is the chief good and glory of our being; but how numerous and how powerful are the temptations which are presented to us to lead us astray! What allurements, baits, enticements, are placed all along the path which we tread!

"Here danger like a giant stands,
Mustering his pale, terrific bands;
There pleasure's silken banners spread,
And willing souls are captive led.

"See where rebellious passions rage,
And fierce desires and lusts engage;
The meanest foe of all the train
Has thousands and ten thousands slain."

Sin meets us with its enticements on every hand. Appetite calls for the rich dish and the sparkling cup; the dainties and luxuries of different climes are placed before us, and we are tempted to make eating and drinking the chief business of life, to prefer the pleasures of the taste to the

serener delights of the mind, and to allow reason and conscience to be stifled and quenched in the indulgences of a gross animalism. The love of wealth calls for large possessions, and we are tempted to barter the durable riches of truth and righteousness for the dust which glitters awhile, and then takes to itself wings and flies away. The love of popularity, of power, and earthly dominion has a deep hold in our nature, and we are tempted to sacrifice principle to policy, to love the praise of men more than the praise of God, and to act the part of Milton's Satanic Majesty, and say,

"Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven."

How can we conquer? By what means can we gain sufficient strength to get the victory over all these temptations? The Gospel points us to the Captain of our salvation. He has traveled this road; he has known these inducements to sin; he "was tempted in all points like as we are;" and yet he triumphed; he resisted the impulses of appetite, conquered the ragings of passion, checked and subdued the love of worldly fame and glory; he brought his whole nature into conformity to the will and requirements of God, and thus gave mankind an example, that they should follow his

steps. O, what a lesson did he give our world in the wilderness of temptation! What a conflict he had there with the pleasures and honors of a corrupt generation, and how nobly did he triumph! He was first tempted to yield to the gratifications of his animal appetites, rather than listen to the voice of moral virtue; he was next tempted to throw himself at the feet of the Jewish aristocracy, and serve his country, in preference to obeying the will of his Father; and he was next tempted to use his powers to gain "the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them," instead of using them for the purpose for which he had received them, to establish truth and righteousness in the earth. And these are the temptations that take hold of our nature. We are prone to let the animal govern the moral, to love policy more than principle, to place pleasure before duty, to bow to the throne of worldly power rather than to the throne of God, and to think more of outward glory and earthly empire, than of inward empire and moral glory. Here are the springs of all the error and crime which disturb and darken our world; and if, when we feel their workings within us, we would fix our eye on him who was "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," — if we would mark his struggles against the enemy, and

catch his spirit, we should gain from him the power of victory over the adversary within us, and be able to say to him, "Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

2. We may derive aid from Christ in seasons of suffering and adversity.

You all know, my friends, that this is a world not only of temptation and sin, but of sorrow and affliction; or, if any of you are too young or too thoughtless now to know it, you will not need to live long to learn this lesson. There are but few countenances on which this solemn truth is not written. "Although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." While there is no such thing as chance in the affairs of the world, in the government of creation, we are born to experience the pains of sickness, the bitterness of disappointment, the darkness and gloom of adversity, and the pangs of death. It has pleased God to make these a part of our inheritance under the sun, and in vain shall we strive to flee from their approach. Go where we will, live how we may, the unwelcome messenger of suffering, sorrow, adversity, will sooner or later find us, and he will tell us, in lan-

guage which we can understand, that "man was made to mourn." Clouds and darkness will gather around us; sickness and death will enter our dwellings, and tear from our fond embrace the lovely and the good; our frames will become bent and broken by the winds and storms of time, and the dark, cold grave will open its mouth to receive us. Then we shall need sympathy, encouragement, and hope. Then shall we feel that this world is all an empty show, a vain, fleeting, fading thing, and over the whole creation, which had once looked so bright and beautiful to us, will be drawn the crape of sorrow. The ardent hopes of youth and the gay scenes of prosperity will then have faded; the companions of our early days will be missing; heaviness and grief will weigh down our hearts; and we shall look about us, and inquire if there are any who can feel for us, and from whom we can receive sympathy, and derive aid. And there may then be those around us who will have experienced the evils that "flesh is heir to," to whom we can relate our sorrows, and from whose sympathizing hearts we can draw strength and comfort. And how sweet and soothing will be the influence which we shall thus derive! "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop, but a good word maketh it glad." Who

has not felt, in the dark hour of suffering and affliction, how precious it is to have the experience and sympathy of a confiding friend, and how inspiring and cheering it is to breathe our wants into his ear? The heart acquires new power, new life, and we can suffer with less complaint, with more patience. And, dear and precious as is the sympathy of the pilgrims of our way, there has One gone before us from whom we can derive more aid, more power, more resignation, than from all other beings in the world. "We have not a High-Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities." He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He knew what it was to suffer the winds and storms of adversity, and to weep over the grave of friends. With pain and trial, he was not only familiar, from his own personal acquaintance, but he had a soul to feel for the grief and bereavement of all the afflicted and suffering around him. And how did he bear his griefs and sorrows? Ah! just as humanity should bear all its woes; just as man should bear all the sufferings that are laid upon him. Not with a stoical indifference, nor a sullen gloom, nor a comfortless despair. While his heart was all alive to the most acute sensations, and his bosom heaved with the most tender emo-

tions, he looked upward to his Father, and leaned upon his Almighty arm, perfectly assured that all these trials and sufferings were ordered in mercy, and that they would conduct him to higher good, and greater glory. In the darkest hour of his sorrow, how much of human nature did he breathe forth in the petition, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" and what a lesson for human nature did he give in the very next sentence: "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done!" Thus he triumphed. He looked above the world; He cast all his care upon Him who suffereth not a sparrow to fall to the ground without his notice, and believed that his afflictions would conduce to his ultimate welfare. And thus we may triumph. It was the purpose of his suffering life to reveal to man the object of God in sending afflictions upon him, to show him that they come from the hand of a Father, and that they will end in the greater perfection and happiness of his children, and thus to breathe into man the spirit of encouragement and hope in the darkest scenes; and if, in seasons of trial and suffering, we would turn to him, mark how he bore our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and imbibe the spirit which he breathed forth from Gethsemane and Calvary, we shall find a remedy for the weakness of our

nature, and gain the victory over the trials and suffering of the world.

3. We may gain aid from the example of Christ in our labors in the cause of human improvement. What is the nature of the work in which we are engaged? Is it the cause of impartial justice and universal benevolence? Would we strip religion of the exclusiveness and bigotry of sectarianism, and make it the equal friend and benefactor of all ranks and conditions of men? Would we see all men regard each other as the children of God, treat each other as equals before him, and look forward to immortality as their equal home? Is this the cause which we love, and which we would spread in the world? And is this cause hated and condemned by the wealthy and popular sects around us? Are we looked upon as the enemies of all religion, denied the name and character of Christians, excluded from the communion of the great mass of professing religionists, and met with proscription and abuse on every hand? Do we have to fight against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places? And is our warfare so severe that we sometimes yield to discouragement, and almost faint in the conflict? Let us turn our eye toward our Master. In this cause of univer-

sal benevolence, he was engaged with all the energies of his soul, and he was hated and persecuted by all the sectarians of his age. And what privations did he suffer, and what opposition and malignity did he experience, in his devotion to this cause! Look over his life. See him going about doing good. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but he hath not where to lay his head." He is despised, scorned, ridiculed, menaced, and frowned upon, wherever he goes; and there are none to sympathize with his labors, but a little company of fishermen from the Galilean lake. He sees the whole world in array against him; and though his disciples are ignorant and timid, yet he faints not, and he cheerfully takes up the cross, and dies upon it, that he may establish the Gospel of peace in the earth. O, let us think of his labors and conflicts. It is good for us to follow him in his journeys, to watch with him in the garden of Gethsemane, and to linger around his cross on the hill of Calvary. From these scenes we may draw strength to labor in the cause of God and man, and be encouraged with the hope of success and victory, if we continue faithful to truth and duty.

Finally, in what scenes, and under what circumstances, may not the Christian derive encourage-

ment and strength from his Master, in his passage through this world of danger and conflict? While he sees that the journey on which he has entered is filled with difficulty and peril, he is not deserted; his eye is fixed on a "celestial Leader, who has himself fought and conquered, and holds forth to him his own crown of righteousness and victory,"—a Leader who had a kindred nature with himself, and who was touched with the feeling of his infirmities. Is he poor? So was his Master. Is he neglected by the world? So was his Master. Is he hated by enemies, and betrayed by those whom he had chosen for his friends? So was his Master. Is he tempted to sacrifice moral principle to worldly policy, and to prefer the pleasures and honors of this world to the convictions of conscience and the voice of moral virtue? So was his Master. Is he visited with adversity, and borne down by the weight of grief and sorrow? So was his Master. And would he triumph? His Master has shown him how. He had an encounter with all these evils of humanity, and "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." In his own trials and conflicts, then, let him keep his eye steadily fixed upon this Conqueror; let him imi-

tate his noble deeds, and drink in his lofty spirit of moral daring and celestial virtue; and he will be able to say with the heroic Paul, "*I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.*"

HUMAN DESTINY.

"And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away."—*Acts* xxvii., 20.

Soon after Paul's defence of Christianity at Jerusalem, he took passage in a ship for Rome, with a crew of "two hundred, threescore and sixteen souls." The first part of their voyage was prosperous and delightful; the silvery waters of the Mediterranean were quiet and placid; the sun lighted their course by day, and the stars by night, and they were encouraged to hope that they should make their "desired haven" without injury or loss. But soon a change came over them. "A tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon," began to sigh through their rigging, and roughly to toss them upon the rude surges of the agitated sea, threatening them with shipwreck and the seaman's grave. "And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on them, all hope that they should be saved was then taken away." Pale with fear, and ghostly with terror, they looked upon each other's coun-

tenances with strange and despairing expressions, every moment expecting to sink into the bosom of the raging deep. But in the midst of this dreadful scene, there was one whose bosom was calm and serene, and who spoke words of peace and comfort to the affrighted crew. It was Paul. In the spirit of the Gospel, and with his characteristic fortitude and benevolence, he "stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar, and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island." Onward they were driven by the violence of the waves, but little believing the testimony of Paul, till they came in sight of land, when hope began to revive; and in their eagerness to escape, some were for throwing themselves out of the ship, and attempt to gain the shore. Here Paul interposed, and said to the captain, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." And he succeeded not only in persuading them to abide in the ship,

but he prevailed upon them to take refreshment and receive comfort. As they had now been driven by the storm fourteen days, they had become weary and exhausted with toil and fear, and they had neglected to take their usual food, and refused to be comforted. See how like a philosopher and a Christian the apostle labored with them. "I pray you to take some meat; for this is for your health; for there shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all; and when he had broken it, he began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat. And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground;" and though she was broken and ruined by the violence of the waves, "it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land."

I have thought this piece of history a fit introduction to a discourse on Human Destiny. I think I see in it a picture which may be very appropriately used to illustrate the present condition and the probable final destiny of the human race. The final destiny of the human race! Whose soul is not stirred with a deep and solemn interest at the thought? Who does not feel the momentousness of the inquiry,—Where and in what will

terminate our being? To what coast are we bound, and what will be our everlasting haven? When we "shuffle off this mortal coil," shall we sink into the waters of nonentity? or shall we be landed on some foreign shore? and what will be our condition there,—shall we be bound in the chains of slavery, or shall we enter the domains of intellectual and moral freedom? There are those who seem to be indifferent to this subject, and who would persuade us that it does not become man, that it is none of his business, to exercise his mind upon it, or to bestow upon it his attention and interest. There *may* be such individuals,—and if there are, we freely grant them the right to their opinion, but I must say that I cannot be of their number. I have an infinite interest at stake in the matter. I am ready to confess that my main business is with the present world, that I have duties here to perform which call for the action of my best powers, and for my constant attention, but I cannot confine my thoughts and aspirations to the present. There is something within me which looks beyond the limits of the passing hour, and loudly inquires, What will be the issue of my being? The inquiry I cannot repress. This bright and glorious universe is nothing to me, in comparison with its

importance. I must think upon it, and if I cannot find an answer to it which will meet and satisfy the wants of my heart, I must weep and lament that I was ever ushered into existence. And the importance which I must and do attach to this inquiry, does not arise solely from my interest in my own being. I have associated with those who were as dear to me as myself, and some of them—the brightest and the best, are gone! The sweetest and loveliest flowers that bloomed in the garden of my youth, alas! where are they? The tender and self-sacrificing companion of my youthful days, and the bright and promising child, the only being that ever wore my own image, have been torn from my embraces, leaving me to buffet the storms of life alone, and making me feel, at times, as if I were living in a world which is little else than a huge sepulchre, outwardly beautiful indeed, but literally filled with bones and putrefaction, and often leading me to say to "corruption, Thou art my mother, and to the worm, Thou art my brother and my sister;" yet from this dreary prison of sorrow, I have looked upward, and asked, with an ardor and a solemnity which I never knew before, for "the way, the truth, and the light," in regard to the purpose of God in the creation of man, especially as it respects his final

condition. And during the past week, my heart has been touched again, and additional interest given to this subject, by hearing of the sudden and most distressing death of a kind and affectionate sister, who grew up with me as a tender plant under the parental roof, but whose offices of sympathy and kindness I can share no longer in the land of the living. And I am beginning to think that the longer I live in this world, the deeper will be the wounds which will be made upon my once young and joyous heart; or, at least, that the more years I see, the more of trial and suffering I shall be called to experience—the more of my friends will be torn from me; and, of consequence, the dearer and more precious to me will be the subject of human destiny. And I know that I am not alone in this matter. I look around me, and I see a world "groaning and travailing in pain." "A few seem favorites of fate," a few appear to live in sunshine and unmixed prosperity; but misfortune, affliction, suffering, is the common lot of mortals. Disease and death are all abroad in the world, cutting down the aged and the young, the parent and the child; and though some may stand longer than others, all will finally have to confess that there is no discharge in the war of death; and there must be a

wide and deep desire to know whether the enemy with which they have to contend can be overcome. I know, therefore, that I am not speaking on an indifferent or useless topic when I speak on the condition and destiny of man.

The ship of Humanity has been launched, and we are out upon the broad ocean of existence. The first part of our voyage has been delightful and full of promise. The season of youth is rife with innocent pleasure, and warm with ardent and promising hopes. The mind has not yet been made to feel the bitterness of disappointment, and the cold pressure of affliction upon the heart has not yet checked its joyous aspirations, and caused it to realize that this is a world of danger and trial. The waters over which we are passing are smooth and beautiful; the winds and storms of adversity have not yet swept over them, and lashed them into fury; the heavens are all clear and bright; and we fondly imagine that we have set sail upon a sea which is unvisited with tempests, and on which we are in danger of no injury, no evil. But we go not far before we learn our mistake. The heavens gather clouds and darkness; winds and storms arise, and sweep over the face of the great deep with dreadful violence, making the ocean foam and "boil like a caldron," and tossing our

bark "to and fro like a drunken man," and at times we give up our minds to the influence of despair, and wonder why it is that our Creator has put us out upon a sea which is agitated with so many currents and swept with so many storms. When fortune frowns upon us, and the raven wing of affliction is spread out over our prospects, when the pale messenger of death comes up from the ghostly shades of corruption, and takes from our bosoms our friends, and conveys them away to his misty and dreary regions, the sun of our mental horizon becomes shrouded in darkness, the stars hide their beautiful faces from our view, and "all hope is taken away."

Complete, settled despair, however, is not common. We are creatures of hope, and this principle of our nature rarely if ever fails us, however dark the heavens, or gloomy and fearful the storm. The world within is not so changeful as the world without. The soul, like the compass of the mariner, is its own place, and the magnetic needle is not more faithful in its attractions toward the Pole, than is the mind of man in its aspirations after immortality and infinite good. He cannot rest his mind on the scenes of the present. He is not content to stop at the grave. His wants, his thoughts, his affections overleap this dark barrier,

and "expatiate on a life to come." Even if his head is so cool and doubting that he cannot look with the eye of faith beyond it, his heart is unwilling to stop at the narrow house, and sink into its cold precincts to dwell forever. The depths of his inward being, and all the affections of his moral nature, cry aloud for an immortal field for their exercise, and an eternal inheritance for their portion. This desire is so natural and strong in the human heart, that in the majority of our race, whether enlightened or ignorant, in Heathen and in Christain lands, it has begotten a hope of another and higher existence. Even the untutored savage has not been without it, and as man has ascended in the scale of civilization and refinement, it has been more and more attractive to his mental eye, and dearer and dearer to the affections of his heart.

"Lo, the poor Indian, whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind;
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way;
Yet simple Nature to his hope has given
Behind the cloud-topt sky, an humbler heaven.
Some safer world in depth of woods embrac'd,
Some happier realm beyond the wat'ry waste,
Where friends once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold."

And when man cannot exercise this hope, and

he cannot believe that he shall finally enter the haven of immortality, how dark are his prospects, how disconsolate his condition! The discontentment and misery which he feels loudly testify that his faith is not in agreement with his nature, and that he was made for a higher destiny than he anticipates. If in this life only he has hope, he is of all creatures most miserable. The brute has not his capacious thoughts, and his ardent desires after immortal good, and therefore it can know nothing of the bitterness which is diffused through all the fountains of his enjoyment by the reflection that he is doomed to be swallowed in the ocean of eternal forgetfulness. And when the winds and storms of adversity gather around him, and his frail bark is tossed upon the heaving billows, he has no comforter; his spirit, like the dove of Noah, goes out upon its trembling pinion to survey the vast and troubled deep, and seek for some island where it can find repose and rest, but, alas, she returns with weary wing and downcast look, and bearing no olive-branch from the land it had sought. And when neither the sun of truth nor the stars of promise appear, and no small tempest of sorrow lays upon him, all hope is taken away, and he yields himself up to despair.

But, my friends, to save us from this dark and

sorrowing state of mind, God hath stooped to our wants, and given us a Revelation. In the teachings of prophets, and especially in the mission of His own Son, we shall find that the Creator has spoken to the mariners on the sea of time, and in tones of tenderness and love exhorted them to "be of good cheer," to trust in him amidst the tempests which lay heavily upon them, and to believe that he "rideth upon the storm," and will finally bring them to their "desired haven." To these ignorant and weary mariners, the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings a chart of the great ocean of being, and a compass by which to regulate their voyage. It is a chart of the divine government, and the compass of eternal truth. It is true, that there are some who have but little confidence in their correctness, and even think that we should know just as much of God and futurity, if we should throw them into the sea; but it is an undeniable fact that those who have studied them with the most care, and especially those who have tried them, and used them most constantly and thoroughly, have had the greatest confidence in their correctness, and they have found themselves cheerful and happy, at peace with themselves and with God, just in proportion as they have yielded to

their instructions, and regulated their course by their directions.

I have called the Gospel a chart of the great ocean of being, and I think there is no extravagance in the comparison. It gives a revelation of the character of God and the nature of his government. It tells us that He who made us is not merely our Creator, but our Father; that he hath created us in his own image, and for the reflection of his glory; that he regards us and treats us as his own children, and that though he lead us through many dark and trying scenes, he will never leave nor forsake us; he will lead us forth by a way which they know not, and conduct us to the green pasture of his favor. How big with sublimity, and how replete with wisdom and comfort are the views which are given of the character of Him who sits at the helm of the universe! Listen. "He hath created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created." "He loveth all the things that are, and hateth nothing which he has made, for he never would have created anything to have hated it." "He is good unto all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." "Clouds and darkness are round about him, but justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne." "He will not cast off forever; but though he cause

grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men." "He will not always chide, for the spirits would fail before him, and the souls he has made." "Consider the birds of the air; your heavenly Father feedeth them: will he not much more take care of you, O ye of little faith?" "He seeth in secret." "Not a sparrow falleth to the ground without his notice, and the very hairs of your head are all numbered before him: Fear ye not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows." Whoever looks up to God through these views, will have a light within him which will be to his soul what the sun is to the eye; and though clouds and storms come over him, his inward eye will see that, while "God maketh darkness his pavilion," he ruleth in goodness, and will make present affliction work for him future and greater good.

I have called the Gospel also a compass, and have I not very appropriately? To the mariners on the sea of time it is a guide, and amidst storm and sunshine it points them to the haven of immortality and eternal delight. How plain is the language, and how rich and consoling its mighty import! "The creature was made subject to van-

ity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God," "The children of this world marry and are given in marriage, but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." "The last enemy, death, shall be destroyed." "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." "And I heard every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, saying, Blessing,

and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

What a heavenly and joyful faith! To all on board the ship Humanity it says, "Be of good cheer," your Father's at the helm, and no harm shall befall you. You shall outride the storm that hangs over your heads; and though you are cast upon the island of death, and your present barque is made a wreck, and goes to ruin, yet ye shall all escape safe to the land of your desire. "For if your earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, ye have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." O, how precious the assurance to the tempest-tost mariner on the ocean of life! It gives an anchor to his soul, which is sure and steadfast in the darkest, stormiest hour; when he is weary and worn down with toil and conflict, it persuades him to take nourishment and comfort, to "be of good cheer," like the crew which Paul instructed; and he is enabled to say, even when the storm rages around him, "O my soul! why art thou cast down, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow

of death, I will fear no evil, for God is with me; his rod and his staff they comfort me."

But, cruel as it would seem, there are those in the world who would take from us this glorious hope, and leave us to the mercy of the winds and waves, without chart, without compass, and without anchor. There are two systems which are engaged in this unnatural and unmerciful work. One is the doctrine of Atheism; the other the doctrine of Endless Misery. The ship Atheism sails from the port of Chance, and is bound for the mælstrom of annihilation. The barque Endless Misery sails from the harbor of Total Depravity, and is bound for the coast of eternal slavery, where the passengers are to be confined in chains as much more galling than any worn on earth, as the infinite is greater than the finite!

The Atheist tells us that man, with all his wonderful powers, came into being without design; that he lives without a purpose, and that death closes his promising career, and plunges him into the black gulf of eternal forgetfulness! And the advocates of this theory call themselves philosophers, and the friends of science, and of our race! Ah!

"Is this your triumph—this your proud applause,
Children of Truth, and champions of her cause?

For this hath science searched, on weary wing,
By shore and sea, each mute and living thing?
Launched with Iluria's pilot from the steep,
To worlds unknown, and isles beyond the deep?
Or round the cape her living chariot driven,
And wheeled in triumph through the sighs of Heaven?
Oh! star-eyed science, hast thou wander'd there,
To waft us home the message of despair?
Then bind the palm, thy sage's brow to suit,
Of blasted leaf, and death-distilling fruit!
But if the warring winds of Nature's strife
Be all the faithless charter of my life,—
If Chance awak'd, inexorable power!
This frail and feverish being of an hour,
Doom'd o'er the world's precarious scene to sweep,
Swift as the tempest travels on the deep,
To know Delight but by her parting smile,
And toil, and wish, and weep, a little while;
Then melt, ye elements, that formed in vain
This troubled pulse and visionary brain!
Fade, ye wild flowers, memorials of my doom!
And sink, ye stars, that light me to the tomb!"

Surely, in the belief of this dark creed, man is wrapped in impenetrable clouds of darkness and gloom; the sun of truth and the stars of immortality cease to glimmer on the mind, and "all hope is taken away."

Confident as the advocate of this theory may be of its truth, there are two or three things which should cool the ardor of his zeal, and at the same time strengthen the faith of the Christian.

1. He cannot prove that there is no future and higher existence for man. He can assert it, but assertion is not proof. He can argue against it, but argument is not demonstration. He can ridicule us for trusting in Revelation as our main ground of hope of a future life; but he stands in just as much need of a revelation to prove that there is no future existence, as the Christian does to prove that there is. He does not see everything that is in the universe. For aught he can tell to the contrary, man has within an immortal principle, and it may outlive the existence of the whole outward creation. The fact is an important one, that some cause has given us existence; and whatever that cause be,—if it be crude, unconscious matter, or even chance,—it cannot be proved that it may not raise us from the dead, or by some other process continue our being; for certainly, it is quite as conceivable that it should *continue* our existence, as that it should have *created* us.

2. In denying to man the hope of a future state, he denies the harmony of nature. He is sometimes heard to discourse largely on the beauty and harmony of nature; but we cannot see how he can deny to man the hope of a future life, without making nature inconsistent with herself, yea, without affirming that there is discord and contra-

diction in the noblest being which he recognizes in creation. Why? Because there is no meaning in the powers and wants of man, if he is not destined for immortality. In other words, if he were not made for immortality, then his nature is a contradiction to the harmony of creation: yea, his nature is at war with his destiny. "The powers of the inferior animals are perfectly suited to their condition and their end. They know nothing, and seek nothing, higher than their present state. In gratifying their appetites, they fulfill their destiny, and pass quietly away. Man alone, according to this theory, comes forth to act a part which carries no meaning, and tends to no consistent end. Endowed with capacities which extend beyond his present sphere, fitted by his rational nature for running the race of immortality, and having aspirations for the attainment of that high goal, he is stopped short at the very entrance of his course. He squanders his activity on pursuits which he sees to be vain. He languishes for knowledge which is placed beyond his reach. He thirsts for a happiness which he is never to enjoy. He sees and laments the disasters of his state, but upon the supposition that there is no future life, he can find for them no remedy." Verily, nature is here turned into an enemy to herself by this theory,

and its advocate is obliged to confess that man, in his view of his destiny, is so far from being the noblest of God's works, that he is the greatest of his failures! And,

3. He can give us nothing better, nothing more consistent or consoling, than the Gospel. "He looks around him, and he sees the unfortunate cheered by its hopes, the aged and infirm on the verge of the grave supported by its spirit, and the dying pillow rendered soft and joyful by its power. I would beseech him, in the name of mercy, to take not this staff from the hand of the tottering veteran, till he can give him a better. Destroy not this last refuge of the unfortunate, till you can offer a safer retreat. Dash not this last cup of consolation from the quivering lips of the dying, unless you can administer a cordial more inspiring. If you can give us anything that will make us more happy in life, or more resigned in death, we will talk of an exchange. But until you are prepared to do this, I entreat you to spare our hopes, and let us drink freely and copiously of the river of life."

But our attention is drawn toward another sail. Ah! she is no stranger. *Endless Misery*—ENDLESS MISERY, is streaming upon her flag! Clearing the mælstrom of annihilation, she is mak-

ing her way to a foreign coast. There the crew is to be landed, and then separated; a few will be conducted into the fields of partial freedom,—the rest are to be led away into the regions of eternal bondage, where the most galling chains are to be riveted upon them, and they be made to work forever in the prison of infinite despair under the direction and the blows of the Prince of everlasting rebellion! And this is called the Gospel of Christ! And this is brought to us in the dark night of adversity, and presented to our lips as the Balm of Gilead, the cure of our woes! Ah! it is more bitter than wormwood! We cannot drink it. It would disturb the functions of our inward life, and pollute all the fountains of our enjoyment. It would wring tears from the benevolent soul, and plant thorns in the dying pillow. It would blast the glory of God, veil the luminary of heaven's goodness in rayless darkness, blot out the bright stars of redemption, and quench the beams of hope. To the evils and sufferings of this world, it would add the prospect of infinite woes and endless agonies, and the soul of man might well murmur at his fate, and even curse the day of his birth. If he thought and felt on the subject, he would—he *must* say, "Oh! this is quite too much for poor human nature; yea, let me rather quietly sink into

the dreary vortex of non-existence, than to be wafted to the shores of immortality, to behold a part of my race, and perhaps the dearest of my friends, torn from God and heaven, and dragged down to the flames of a quenchless hell, where they will be 'forever burning, yet unconsumed; forever wasting, yet enduring still; forever dying, yet never dead.' "

But it is said that man must submit, if it does seem hard. "The conditions of the Gospel were given them," it is said, "and they might have obeyed; but they refused to comply with them, and the fault, therefore, is all their own." So it is very generally argued, and many there be who think that it makes the crooked all straight. We grant that there are conditions in the Gospel, and if we did not believe that they would ultimately be complied with, we should despair of the final salvation of our race. But we believe that God knew what he was about when he established these conditions, and made such arrangements for their being regarded and obeyed, that they will harmonize with his own good purpose, and result in the fulfillment of his will—the ultimate salvation of man. We have an appropriate illustration in the case of Paul and the ship. He told the affrighted crew that though they should be cast

upon a certain island, they should all ultimately be saved. "There shall be no loss of any man;" and so the end proved. But, while on their voyage, as they came in sight of land, some resolved to "flee out of the ship." Here Paul interceded, and said, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." This was equally true, but it had no effect to annul the first declaration, because they yielded to the condition, and were saved. So, we conceive, it is and will be with mankind. The Gospel comes to them while they are on the rough ocean of life, and says, "Be of good cheer, for there shall be no loss of any man, but of the ship;" "The living God is the Saviour of all men;" "He will not cast off forever," for "he will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth." This is divine truth. But while on their passage to the haven of eternal salvation, as they pass islands which seem to promise them pleasure and profit, they are tempted to throw themselves into the waters of sin, and risk their fate to their individual exertions. Here the voice from above speaks again, "Except these abide in the Gospel, ye cannot be saved." This also is divine truth, and so they find it. For if they plunge out into the troubled ocean of transgression, they find in it no rest day nor night; it

is an element for which they were not made, and in which they cannot be happy, and they will all therefore be glad to hearken to their commander, and obey; and "the Captain of our salvation" is of such a character, that he will not cast them from him, and commit them to the devouring elements, because they have been so foolish as to try them, but he will stretch forth his soft but mighty hand, and receive them to himself; so that all will finally "*escape safe to land.*" And so it is written, "Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he hath put down all rule, and all authority, and power; for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet." "And the Lord God shall swallow up death in victory, and wipe away tears from all faces."

Such, my friends, is the hope of the Gospel. Do you not feel the need of its tidings and consolations, to cheer and sustain you in the journey of human life? Do you not want its chart, compass, and anchor, in your passage across the storm-swept ocean of existence? Alas, there are some who seem indifferent in regard to this matter, and there are those who even say that "if this doc-

trine is true, there is no use in preaching it!" What! no use in knowing the truth? Why did Paul tell the truth to the despairing crew? Ah! it made them *free!* It made them of "good cheer," and availed to give them nourishment and comfort. And is there no use in knowing the truth in relation to our final destiny?—no use in being made cheerful and joyful by its divine assurances? I know the answer. While driven and tossed by the winds and tempests of adversity, I have lent an ear to its "still small voice," as it has whispered to my pained and burdened heart, and I know it has power to still, at least, the tempest within, and to give quietness, nourishment, and "good cheer" to the soul; and I say with the poet,

> "Should all the forms which men devise
> Assault my faith with treacherous art,
> I'd call them vanities and lies,
> And bind the Gospel to my heart."

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."—*John*, xv. 11.

When I turn to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and lend an ear to its tones, I feel sure that I am listening to such music as never had its origin in this jarring, discordant world. The strains which I hear are so sweet and harmonious, so well adapted to the moral ear, and so soothing and tranquillizing in their influence, that I can ascribe their origin to nothing but that Hand which spread out the heavens, moulded our nature in the image of the Infinite, and gave our souls their capacities and wants.

It is to me one of the strongest evidences of the divinity of the religion of the Son of God, that it does not aim to augment the fears, and multiply the sorrows, of mankind; but that, on the contrary, it speaks to them in words of peace and love; and would hush all their fears to rest, by persuading them that He, whose "kingdom ruleth over all," understands their condition and wants, and that He will forever be their Friend and

Benefactor. I have studied this religion in vain, if it brings any other than joyful tidings to the children of men, and if it has any other tendency than to give them reconciliation and comfort. Be their condition and circumstances what they may, be they rich or poor, in prosperity or adversity, in the paths of virtue or in the ways of vice, it bears to them a cheerful message, and tells them that they all have a Friend and Father in heaven, who will much more take care of them than of the outward world, and who will never become their enemy and hater, even though they disregard his authority, and tread under feet his laws: he will still love them, and use the rod of his justice as an instrument of mercy, to correct, reform, and bless them, "even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." It is not so, I think, with the religious systems which owe their origin to the wisdom of men. They all go upon the idea that there is something wrong in God, or his government, that the Deity has become an enemy to his creatures on account of their sins; or, at any rate, that there is great cause for fear and alarm, and that some bloody offering is to be made, or some disagreeable and irksome duty to be discharged, before the soul can be safe under the government

of its Maker. So it was with the religious teachings of the Heathen in days of old, and so it has been with every system of religion under heaven, save the Gospel of Christ. The burden of their communications has been, that the order of the universe has been broken, that the world is resting under some infinite curse, and that God will send all to everlasting destruction, unless they do something to heal the breach in his government, or to obtain the smiles of his angry countenance. In this way, false religion has engendered melancholy and fear, and instead of relieving or abating the evils of life, and giving man such views of the divine character as to enable him to triumph over them, false religion has added the prospect of imaginary woes to his real miseries, and to the fact that his own conduct is wrong, it has connected the idea that there is something wrong in God; thus making it impossible for him to have that confidence and joy which constitute the life of the soul. But the Gospel comes to man with better news. It tells him that there is no disorder in the universe, except it be in his own conduct, that God has made no mistakes in the administration of the world, and that He will never leave nor forsake the creatures he has made; and

hence, it would cause them to trust in him with all the heart, and to have peace and joy in the knowledge of truth.

Am I right, my friends? Why did Jesus Christ teach and labor? Why did he preach the great principles of the Gospel to the children of men? What was the object? We have the answer in our text. "*These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*" What a beautiful commentary on his life and labors! His public ministry was now closed. For years, he had traveled through the vales and over the hills of Palestine, uttering things which had been kept secret from the foundation of the world; and though he had preached repeatedly to great multitudes, and though he had been followed by a dozen Galilean fishermen, there was not yet a single being on earth, himself excepted, who fully understood the purpose for which he had labored. That purpose he now states with great explicitness. "*I have spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.*" He had labored to impart his own joy to men, and to give their hearts a fullness of the same. And what was his joy? Not delight in sensual and worldly pleasures, nor in scenes of revelry and mirth, but con-

fidence in God and hope of good things to come. In this one respect, what a miracle was his life! He was environed with danger, difficulty, and even death in its bitterest form, but he always had a joy within him which the world did not give, and which it could not take away. When his enemies persecuted him; when his friends forsook him, and when he looked in vain to find a being on earth to sympathize with him, and comfort him in his trials and sufferings, there was sunshine and gladness in his soul. To God and the future he always turned with emotions of delight, confident that the evils of the present were ordered in mercy, and that all things would work together for good. And this joy he wished to impart to his human brethren. He knew that they needed it. He beheld their condition. He saw them exposed to sickness, misfortune, poverty, suffering, and death, and he counted not his life dear unto himself, if he could impart to them his own views of the divine government, and give them such a fullness of joy as to enable them to gain a complete triumph over the evils of the world.

And did he labor in vain? Look into the New Testament. "God said, Let there be light, and there was light." The introduction of the Gospel, so different was its message from the teachings of

the world,—so glorious and joyful were its tidings, it was like the bursting forth of light upon the darkness and turmoil of chaos, when "the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep." It was ushered in with the announcement, "*Behold, I bring you good tidings of great* JOY, *which shall be unto all people.*" And whenever and wherever it was preached, and by whomsover it was received, it was attended with demonstrations of joy. In one of the parables, the joy which it yields to the true believer is represented by the delight which a certain man had on finding a valuable treasure in a field; so great was his joy, that he was ready to give all he had for the field. And so it was, in fact, with all who received the Gospel, as it came fresh and pure from the lips of its heaven-commissioned teachers. Will you mark the fact? It is a thing of no small importance. It shows that the true Gospel is not after man. It proves that the genuine religion of the New Testament is adapted to the condition and wants of human nature, and that it has power to wipe away the tears from the weeping eye of humanity, and carry comfort and consolation to the burdened heart of sorrow. The sacred historian ays, "*The disciples were* FILLED WITH JOY." And when they went forth preaching, like their

Master they carried joy and gladness to all hearts who received their message. They preached in Samaria, and we are told that "*there was great* JOY *in that city.*" And in their preaching, they were frequently heard to say, "We declare unto you glad tidings,"—"There is peace in believing, and joy in the Holy Spirit,"—"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have *hope*;" and after preaching in this manner, they often pronounced upon the people this benediction, "Now the God of hope *fill you with all* JOY *and peace in believing.*" And they were not using words without meaning. What was the testimony of those who heard and believed their preaching? Were they filled with doubts and fears? Did they look up to God with trembling, or upon the unseen future with dread and terror? They have given the answer: will you hear it? "*We who believe do enter into* REST." "God hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light." "We have peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." "We rejoice in hope of the glory of God." "*Believing, we have joy* UNSPEAKABLE *and* FULL OF GLORY."

Here we learn something. Here is a fact which

the Christian should hold in perpetual remembrance. Jesus Christ spoke to the children of men, that he might impart his own joy to their hearts, and that their joy might be full. And this glorious purpose was accomplished in all who received it as it was preached by him and his disciples; they were delivered from all withering doubts and tormenting fears; they had peace from God, and were filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

Now, why was this? What was it which those who received the Gospel believed, that gave them so much joy? Let me ask, Was it the cold doctrine of scepticism? Did the Gospel bring them the tidings that there is no God, or that, if there is an Author to the existence of man and of nature, he is a mere abstract principle, a virtual nonentity, which takes no supervision of the affairs of the universe, no interest in the condition and welfare of mankind, and devises no means for their moral and spiritual happiness? And, consequently, did the Gospel tell them that man is an absolute orphan in creation, that he came into existence without design, and without a purpose, that he lives for no higher end than the stone over which he stumbles, and that when his body sinks in

death, his spirit evaporates, and his being ends in eternal night? I say, was this the doctrine of the Gospel which Jesus preached that he might fill men with joy, and which the disciples and all the early believers found "joy unspeakable" in receiving to their hearts? My hearers can answer the question. It is a question which they can understand, which comes within the scope of their powers. Say, then, can the heart of humanity find joy in this doctrine? Does it do your souls good,—does it fill you with comfort and gladness, to think that this bright and beautiful creation is without a wise and kind Creator, that yourselves are children without a Father, and that all your high thoughts and pure aspirations are mere bubbles on the waters of existence, and that they must perish in everlasting nothingness? I know that I need not press the question. Every thinking, feeling mind answers, in a loud voice, No. This doctrine has no food for the hungering soul of man. There is no nourishment in it for the social affections and the moral sentiments. It has no higher tendency than to starve the soul, and diffuse the coldness of death over all its noble faculties. Most truly did an eloquent orator say of this doctrine, when it was the prevailing philos-

ophy in France, "It spreads the funeral crape over nature, discourages oppressed innocence, and insults death."

No; the chilling, freezing doctrine of scepticism was not the faith which Jesus Christ brought into the world, and which warmed and rejoiced the hearts of the first believers in Christianity. Such a belief, so far from giving them cheerful views of the government of the universe, and filling them with "joy unspeakable and full of glory," would have eclipsed all the beauty and glory of the universe to their minds, and filled them with sorrow and despair. What, then, was the doctrine which they received? Let me ask again, Was it the doctrine which was the universal sentiment of the Christian world during the dark ages, and which is still quite common in the church,—the doctrine which teaches that God is an enemy to a part of his human family, and that he will shut them up in a great furnace, and there burn and torture them with "burning racks and fiery coals," as long as his own throne shall stand? Do not say this is an improper question. The doctrine of which I speak is a very common one, and the question which I ask is one which you can easily answer. Does the idea that God hates a portion of his creatures, and that he will eternally pour upon

them the besom of his wrath, give peace and joy to the heart? Does it fill the soul with "joy unspeakable and full of glory," to think even that we shall be the favored ones, — that we shall finally enter the high and holy habitation of heaven, but that we shall be obliged to look down into a great flaming furnace, and behold a part of our race, perhaps our own children and friends, rolling and writhing amidst the flames, and to know that they can never, *never* be relieved? I can imagine hearts so steeped in selfishness, and so hardened in cruelty, as to prefer this doctrine to every other, and to find in it fullness of joy. It was no doubt a joyful thought with the ancient Pharisees, that God hated the Gentiles, and it is written of Nero that it would have been his greatest pleasure to have had all the people of Rome made into one man, and then to have cut his head off with his own hands; and to such monsters of pride and cruelty, this doctrine of divine partiality and endless misery would be the very perfection of religion. They could have no greater joy, than to know that their enemies are the outcasts of God, and to gaze upon their endless agonies; and they would shout, "Glory, glory to God in the highest," when they heard their wailings and groans. But I cannot conceive that the human heart in its

natural state, much less the heart of the true Christian, can derive joy from such a faith and such prospects.

Who can fulfill the Gospel rule, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," and be filled with joy at the thought that his neighbor is under the curse of God; and who can lay any claim to humanity, to say nothing of Christianity, who talks of experiencing delight in the ceaseless torture of a part of his race, even though they are his enemies? I have known many nominal believers in this doctrine, but I must say that I have known but a very few *real* believers in it. The heart which God has given them is too good for it. They read it, perhaps, every day in the creed, and a blazing hell is kept constantly before them in the preaching to which they listen, but human nature is generally too strong for the creed and the preacher, and they persuade themselves that they and their friends will escape. But when the creed and the preacher prove too mighty for the pleadings of the heart, and the mind adopts the sentiment as a living truth, what is the effect? Ah! peace and joy forsake the breast; hope, the only comfort of the miserable, expires within them, and the soul sinks into despair, often into insanity. Mark it where you will, the advocates of this doc-

trine are joyful and happy just in proportion as they disbelieve it, that is, just in proportion as they succeed in throwing off the idea that the doctrine is true; and they are filled with sorrow and misery just in proportion as they believe it. Can this be the Gospel, then? Can this be any part of that faith which rejoiced the hearts of the early Christians? Nay, nay, not a particle of it. And do you not see why? Belief in the Gospel gave joy, but belief in this doctrine gives sorrow. The early Christians said, "BELIEVING, *we have joy unspeakable and full of glory;*" but if they had been believers in the doctrine of endless misery, they would have said, as its modern believers say, at least in their hearts, "Believing, we have sorrow unspeakable and full of despair." This is certainly the sentiment of all who have made a hearty trial of the doctrine, and the conclusion ought to be that they are not true Gospel believers. I will give you an illustration. I know of a mother who was lately called to bury a son. She had been educated in the doctrine which teaches that this world is a state of probation, and that all who do not experience a miraculous conversion in this state must suffer never-ending torments in the one to come. The son died without giving satisfactory evidence that he had expe-

rienced such a change, and the good woman was almost distracted. She awfully feared that there was no safety for her son, and she more than half imagined that he had fallen under the endless curse of his Maker. Her faith gave her no reconciliation, no joy, and as she gave utterance to her sorrow, she was heard to say, "I cannot be a Christian, because I am not reconciled." In all sincerity and charity, we believe that the woman was more than half right. She had a good heart; she loved her son, and she could not bear the thought that he would be banished from her forever; but she was wanting in the faith of the true Christian. Had she been a believer in genuine Christianity, in the Gospel in its fullness, as preached by Jesus Christ, and as believed and rejoiced in by all the first Christians, she would have given up her dying son to his Father in heaven without a murmur or a fear, and bowed with resignation to the word which called him away in the brightness and beauty of youth.

We therefore come to the conclusion, that Jesus Christ taught neither the cold doctrine of scepticism, which teaches that there is not a God who loves and will take care of his creatures, nor the more common doctrine which teaches that God loves but a part of his creatures, and that he will

forever burn the rest of them in the fires of a quenchless hell; and we have come to this conclusion from the fact, that the things which Jesus spake filled men with joy, while these doctrines have no other influence than to fill the mind with gloom and sorrow. And we have positive proof of the correctness of this conclusion in the teachings of Christ. I will give you his words. "*Take heed, and beware of the doctrine of the Sadducees and of the Pharisees.*" The doctrine of the Sadducees was a system of speculative scepticism, which contended that God took no interest in the human race, and that their existence would end in the grave; and Christ warned men against it, because it would have a chilling influence on their hearts, and leave them without God, and without hope in the world. The doctrine of the Pharisees was a partial system of religion, which taught that God loved none but a favored few, and that he would inflict endless torments upon a large portion of his creatures; and he warned men against it, because he knew that it had a tendency to shut the mind up, even in a worse state of darkness and sorrow than the gloomy doctrine of the Sadducees.

"*These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might*

l efull." What things? That is, what views of the divine character and human destiny did Jesus give, which could fill mankind with joy? We will give you a brief answer, and ask you to search the Scriptures, to see if we do not tell the truth.

1. He taught that God is the equal Friend and Father of all his intellectual and moral offspring, that he loves them with pure and undying affection, and that he will much more take care of them than he will of the outward creation. Will you hear Jesus speak? "Your Father seeth in secret." "He knoweth what ye have need of before ye ask him." "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and the unjust." "He loveth the world." "He is kind to the unthankful and the evil." "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet *your* heavenly *Father* feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Consider the lilies of the field; how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass which is to-day in the field, and is to-morrow cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" "Are not two sparrows sold for a

farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." What exalted and exalting conceptions of the character of our Maker! How well calculated to give mankind confidence in the care and love of their Creator, and to inspire their souls with joy in every scene and trial of life!

2. He taught that a glorious immortality is in reserve for man, in which he will be delivered from the imperfections and sorrows incident to flesh and blood, and be made equal to the angels in heaven. Hear him again. "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me; and this is the will of him that sent me, that of all he hath given me," ("and he hath given me power over all flesh,") "I should lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day." "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." "In the resurrection they shall neither marry, nor be given in marriage, but they shall be equal unto the angels in heaven; neither can they die any more, for they are the

children of God, being the children of the resurrection." What cheerful and soul-comforting views of human destiny! No wonder that the first believers of the Gospel were filled with joy unspeakable by their faith, and were able to say, even in affliction and death, "We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received reconciliation."

Such are the things which Jesus spake, that his joy might remain in men, and that their joy might be full; and what a blessing have these divine sentiments been to the world! How much cheerfulness have they shed over human life, and how many hearts have they soothed and comforted, when they have been pained by the weight of adversity or by the inroads of death! Ah! we think but little of the value of their influence on the condition and happiness of our race; aye, very little indeed, till we have been made to suffer the trials and evils which lie in the path of mortals. The value of the cheerful view which the Gospel imparts has been seen by the celebrated Dickens, and he has expressed it in the following sentence:—"If I have put into my writings anything which can fill the young mind with better thoughts of death, or soften the grief of older hearts; if I have written one word which can afford pleasure or consola-

tion to old or young in time of trial, I shall consider it something achieved—something which I shall be glad to look upon in after life." This is the language of benevolence, and thousands have been made to shed tears of joy to think that there is a writer of fiction who breathes so much cheerfulness through his writings, as to soothe the fears and mitigate the sorrows of some of his race. But what has Dickens said, or what can he say, which has or can have half the power to give our race cheerful and joyful views of God and the future, as the things which were spoken by Jesus Christ? And yet, there are many in the world who seem to be unconscious that the Gospel has been, or can be, of any service to mankind, and who would even have us believe that it is a cheat and a curse; and there are others who say that, if the Gospel is good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people, there is no need of preaching it! O, when will mankind learn the true sources of happiness, and act as if they were the friends of their race!

"These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

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